The Use of Silence by Japanese Learners of English in Cross-Cultural Communication and its Pedagogical Implications

by

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THESIS CONTAINS VIDEO

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This thesis is dedicated to

all students and teachers in the past, present and in the future

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* A video-recorded tape which contains four different classrrom interactions is supplemented with this thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the use of silence by Japanese learners of English in cross-cultural communication. It also considers how cross-cultural misunderstandings can be avoided in a pedagogic context. To this end, an analysis is made of a contrastive study of the use of silence by Japanese students learning English, and by Western students learning Japanese. The study draws on insights from the ethnographic approach.

The study consists of three parts. The first part, Chapters 1-4, investigates the theoretical background to the study. Chapter 1 examines various definitions of the word 'culture' and investigates the role of Pragmatics in cross-cultural communication. Chapter 2 surveys studies of silence in various socio-cultural contexts. Chapter 3 more specifically explores the use of silence in the Japanese context and its relation to Japanese cultural values and sociocultural norms. Then, Chapter 4 shifts attention to examine differences of communicative styles between Japanese and Westerners, looking at several important features in interaction.

In part two, Chapters 5-8, the ethnographic approach takes the lead in the interpretation of the interview and observational material. Chapter 5 offers an overview of the study and carefully considers the principles of ethnography guiding this investigation. Chapter 6 considers the research design in relation to the context and purposes of the investigation. The data is analysed in Chapters 7 and 8 interpreting the use of silence from a socio-cultural perspective. Chapter 7 discusses the results of the questionnaires. Chapter 8 concentrates on the analysis of the video-recorded data. The last Chapter, Chapter 9, concludes with suggestions of possible pedagogic approaches tackling cross-cultural misunderstanding in foreign language learning.

Personal Introduction

Silence is a message without sound.

On the way home, two Japanese secondary students were talking about a work of Japanese literature. After some discussion, they agreed that silence is a message with no sound. This insight comes from my own experience a long time ago, having pondered over what silence is.

Several years had passed. I started my career as an English teacher in Japan. I was struck as a foreign language teacher, by the Native English teachers' frustration in English language teaching in the Japanese context in terms of material, curriculum, methods, teacher education, and the examination system. This made me think about what communicative language teaching, learner autonomy, and creative thinking are. The more eager I was to know, the more I realized that I needed to experience it by myself.

In coming to England to read for a Master's degree, I had numerous chances to communicate with others from different cultural backgrounds. At the beginning, it was hard for me to express my ideas because of the spontaneous turn-taking in English, lack of experience and lack of confidence. On the other hand, having overcome difficulties, cross-cultural communication taught me the joy in expressing myself without being conscious of others unnecessarily. It became totally natural to me. I found that I could be both direct or indirect in public.

Returning to Japan, in the first lesson at a Junior college. I was full of hope and expectation, my ambition was broken by an invisible wall between students and myself. The direct import

from the U.K., the Western way of teaching struck my students who sat back and had been wondered what I was expecting . As a teacher, I felt frustrated like an outsider. As a learner, I realized how difficult it is for students to change their learing style or strategies automatically as expected. It led me to think about what the solution could be. Is there any way to bridge the gap between the West and the Japanese? If we try to negotiate in cross-cultural communication, what is needed in foreign language teaching / learning, and for what?.

It is sincerely hoped that this thesis could bridge a gap between students and teachers, between the West and the Orient, and also could be a thought to search our own identities as learners, teachers and an individual.

This thesis consists of voices from learners, teachers, various people who co-oporated to pursue this topic and my own.

The use of silence by Japanese learners of English in cross-cultural communication and its pedagogical implications

Introduction

I.1 Background of the study

Due to the rapidly expanding internationalization of various sectors such as business, science, and technology, the need for cross-cultural communication at an individual, national and global level has been increasing. This social situation naturally provides individual language learners with tremendous opportunities to interact cross-culturally and raise their awareness of the value of English in cross-cultural communication.

Considering cross-cultural communication and the role of English language teaching, there is much evidence that not only acquiring the target language itself but also developing an appropriate understanding of socio-cultural aspects related to it, is necessary for effective cross-cultural communication. This is because communication breakdown is likely to take place when people from different socio-cultural backgrounds interact without a proper understanding of the target culture and acquiring appropriate language use in particular social contexts.

What follows is primarily concerned with the teaching situation and learning environment of Japanese students of English both in monolingual and multilingual settings.

Firstly, in the monolingual setting in Japan, traditionally the methods, the curriculum and the examination system have emphasized knowledge of the language, and paid scant attention to communicative ability or strategies required by speakers in social contexts. As a result, in spite of several years of learning experience, most Japanese learners of English are not sufficiently confident to put themselves into authentic cross-cultural communicative contexts. As a result of increasing polarisation between what are held to be westernising influences, and the

reassertion of traditional Japanese values, the gulf between what students are taught, and what they acquire required for effective cross-cultural communication is, if anything, widening. In response to this situation, the emphasis in English language teaching has changed in recent years from acquiring as much linguistic knowledge as possible to using the language itself for individual communicative purposes in cross-cultural settings. This is evident in the recent gradual change of the national curriculum, and the revised aims for English language learning proposed by the Ministry of Education, which aims at facilitating students' communicative competence. During this transitional period for the internal educational system in Japan, a growing number of Japanese learners have been studying English outside Japan in multilingual settings. This context seems to be more practical and successful as it provides learners with opportunities for genuine cross-cultural communication. However, the fact that there is still a key issue which is common to both settings should not be forgotten. That is, whatever the learning circumstances are, as has been frequently pointed out, Japanese learners of English show a passive attitude and remain silent in class, especially during the very early stages of the learning process. Due to this phenomenon, language teachers have difficulties in facilitating learners into active learning and also in exploring ways of how to break the great wall of silence. This is because learners' responses are largely non-verbal. Therefore, it is not an easy task for teachers to understand the reasons of learners' silence or its significance.

The reasons for the frequent breakdown in communication that occurs when Japanese students communicate cross-culturally, and why it is so difficult for them to interact confidently in English both in and outside class, are unclear. It may be simply because they do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge, therefore, to articulate their opinions or feelings confidently. However, students' difficulties manifested in their inability to react positively and spontaneously

in expressing themselves, might also have a deeper socio-cultural basis. Whatever the origins of this communicative difficulty, one consequence has been the development of a stereotypical view of Japanese students which has resulted from misunderstanding between teachers and learners. To a large extent, these misunderstandings arise from different expectations of students and teachers, particularly regarding the role of students as active learners. In connection with this, it is necessary for us to investigate the phenomenon of silence in the classroom context and to understand its significance when used by Japanese learners of English. By keeping silent, what do students mean, and what do they think?

I.1 The aim of the study

This study concentrates on investigating Japanese learners' use of silence in cross-cultural communication in order to achieve an understanding of their difficulties in participating in cross-cultural interaction. In other words, it aims to examine the reasons why Japanese learners tend to be silent from a pragmatic and a socio-cultural perspective. This investigation has two purposes. One is to understand the use of silence itself; the other to suggest possible approaches to facilitate learners' active participation.

In considering these two areas, specific focus is placed on analysing the spoken and unspoken communication of learners in class. This includes their use of gestures which is broadly defined here as 'a movement of the face or body which communicates meaning' (Richards 1985: 38). That is, both verbal and non-verbal responses by students are analysed and examined within the context of an analysis of interactions between teachers and learners. The importance of including the analysis of gesture as a necessary part of learners' classroom behaviour is discussed in Chapter 4 and in Chapter 8.

This study also draws attention to interconnections between language use and cultural values-

neither of which can be treated in isolation.

This is partly because in cross-cultural communication, it is inevitable that individuals unconsciously draw upon their own socio-culturally oriented communicative patterns; with the inevitable possibility of this leading to communication breakdown or misunderstanding in various settings. In order to arrive at an understanding of the use of silence by Japanese learners of English, and also raise our awareness of this specific aspect of communication, it is necessary to investigate this topic not only through classroom discourse analysis but also by locating this in the broader socio-cultural context in which beliefs and values are shaped. In considering the implications of silence, it is thus necessary to compare its significance in Western and Japanese settings in order to understand, and perhaps suggest solutions to the problems of Japanese learners in these contexts.

An important aspect of this research is an exploration of the significance of the relationship between silence and gesture. It follows from this that silence can further be viewed as a component of conversational sequences, therefore, an important element of communication. This goes against the assumption that silence simply marks pauses between conversational turns.

Instead, according to the view proposed here, silence can be interpreted in numerous ways according to its specific social context. Secondly, in order to ground the use of silence in its broader interactive context, it is necessary to investigate its relationship to gesture. This is because the combination of silence and such visual elements can be an effective way of conveying meaningful messages. In considering this relationship, it is hoped that the kinds of ethnographic approach adopted here, in this study can be utilised to develop a clearer

understanding of their pedagogic implications.

Another main aim of this study is to establish links between the understanding of a specific culture's use of silence and the development of effective pedagogical approaches aimed at active learning. That is, to develop a pedagogical approach with a view to exploring what could be done in actual learning circumstances in order to allow Japanese learners to express themselves more freely, communicate successfully and also manage to solve problems by themselves. Therefore, the particular kinds of approach, tasks, and teaching or learning procedure, which could possibly facilitate Japanese learners' active participation in cross-cultural communication, will be explored.

In this study, the subjects are Japanese students learning English in Japan and Western students learning Japanese in England. Through this comparative approach, it is hoped that a fuller understanding of the use of silence by Japanese learners, and its difficulties can be reached in order to promote active participation in cross-cultural interaction.

1.3 An overview of the study

Having outlined the purpose of this study, I shall provide an overview of its four components.

The first part, Chapter 1 and 2, provides the theoretical background to the study.

Chapter 1 examines defining characteristics of culture and pragmatics as key concepts of cross-cultural communication.

Chapter 2 consists of a review of previous studies into the function and meaning of silence. This will include an analysis of both the positive facilitative aspects and negative effects which these studies have revealed. I shall then proceed to examine some of the research perspecitves on which those studies have been based, for example, conversational approaches

which examines its use and particularly its form (frequency of occurence or length of the silence), as an element of conversational sequences. I shall also discuss the nature of silence in relation to its use in specific social contexts. Therefore, particular attention will be drawn to its function and meaning in context.

The second part, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, will discuss the characteristics of the use of silence by the Japanese in relation to their communicative styles. In Chapter 3, Japanese cultural norms, which influence the use of silence in the Japanese context will be discussed. In Chapter 4, several significant features such as turn-taking, overlapping, interruption and backchannelling will be investigated and their relevance to the present study will be discussed. Moreover, the definition and the importance of gesture in the analysis of interaction will also be considered.

The third part of this study, which includes Chapters 5 to 8 is primarily concerned with empirical research. Chapter 5 seeks to establish a framework for the overall research design including the design of the questionnaires and the basis of classroom observation. In addition to this, characteristics of classroom discourse will be examined. In Chapter 6, more detailed research methods for data collection on the use of silence in the EFL context will be examined. The following chapter involves a discussion of the results of questionnaires. The focus will be upon understanding the learners' use of silence and how this neglects their own cultural values and attitudes to silence. The interrelationship between the existence of silence and students' difficulties in expressing themselves will be also examined. Also, English teachers' interpretations of learner silence will be explored. The final chapter of this section involves a discussion of the empirical data which are discussed in the preceding three chapters.

This will involve relating these data (video-recorded classroom interaction) to theoretical perspectives on the socio-cultural implications of silence. Both a cross-cultural and a pragmatic approach are adopted, as both are crucial to such analysis.

The final part, Chapter 9, proceeds to investigate possible pedagogical approaches aimed at facilitating Japanese learners' active participation in cross-cultural interaction. In order to develop successful pedagogical practice, it is necessary to investigate effective and appropriate approaches which are sensitive to the needs of learners, and which maximise opportunities for them to consiously explore how speakers and listeners interact within and across cultures. In this respect, it is argued, learners need to discover how different signals such as silences or gestures are used. I conclude with an evaluation of tasks and activities with a view to considering their potential for raising awareness of some of the issues discussed previously.

The overall aim of this study, threfore, is to raise awareness of extra-linguistic components of discourse, and seek to emphasize their importance in terms of developing all round linguistic fluency and cultural awareness.

Each learning environment has different difficulties or limitations in various ways, however, an individual classroom or each lesson has potentially tremendous and infinite possibilities to create a fascinating series of moments for learning. It is hoped that both learners and teachers will be able to raise their awareness of the use of language in specific social contexts and take actions to facilitate active language learning and cross-cultural communication.

Chapter 1 Culture and Pragmatics

1.0 Introduction

It is now generally acknowledged that socio-cultural aspects are an integral feature of second language learning, I shall specifically discuss the nature of two significant concepts in this section, namely 'culture' and 'pragmatics.'

1.1 What is culture?

It is extremely difficult to explain what exactly we mean when we say 'culture', due to the diversity and complexity of the concept. There is a wide range of interpretations of culture in ELT literature. For example, Kramsch (1992: 41) sees culture as an 'enormous complexity of human relations.' Scollon & Scollon (1995: 125) also consider cultures as large and superordinate categories. In some contexts, culture can be seen as a system of shared meanings such as customs or beliefs. Suzuki (1978: 7) defines culture as 'a set of behaviour and thought patterns that are peculiar to a certain group of people' and emphasizes its historical and transmitting aspects. However, as with many other abstract concepts, an absolute definition of culture is impossible, as it is, subject to conflicting definitions. It is also true that individuals are located in different 'sub-cultures,' according to various affiliations such as class, gender and ethnicity within a specific community and these may respect more powerful ties of solidarity than those traditionally associated with national or community 'culture.' This means that even in the same social context, numerous definitions and interpretations of identity exist. However, I shall try to outline several characteristic aspects of culture which have emerged from previous investigation. Goodenough (1961), for example, sees culture as socially acquired knowledge, that is, 'beliefs needed in order to operate a social system in a manner acceptable to its members.

Meanwhile, for Koyama (1992), culture is closely related to 'patterns of communication.' She explains that members of the same culture share 'scenarios', which include commonly accepted values and attitudes, or models that determine the speech and behaviour appropriate to a given situation. As she says, it is true that sets of common beliefs or behaviour play a crucial role in interpreting what is going on in a given specific social context, and what reactions are expected.

In the context of the present discussion, it is also useful to look at Hall's (1959) view of the nature of culture. He considers that culture controls behaviour in deep and pervasive ways, which are not susceptible to the conscious control of the individual. As he points out, specific socio-cultural behaviour might be unconsciously internalized by the members of particular societies as a result of daily routine or habit. The result of this process of acculturalation, is the internalisation of a system of knowledge which mediates values, attitudes and behaviour between members of a particular community. Three questions can be raised regarding this process, namely: where are the boundaries between culture to be found, are these commensurate with language and national identity? What is the nature of the processes involved in the creation of knowledge within a given community? And which members of a cultural community are represented in the establishment of a given set of practices?

With regards to the first of these questions, attempts to draw boundaries between cultures encounter a number of problems related to issues such as ethnicity, nationality, gender, religion and language. In reality, relatively homogeneous nations like Japan, in which the majority population shares characteristic ways of greeting or ways of gestures, there is a temptation to view culture only in terms of national traits. Though such national traits can provide a useful perspective on the boundaries between cultures, it has to be remembered that

they are not definite categories, and frequently circumscribe diverse cultural groups with conflicting practices. For instance, this equivalence of nation and culture hardly applies to internally diverse nations such as the USA, South Africa or any other countries born out of the colonial experience. Therefore, other cultural factors need to be investigated in order to understand its multi-dimensional characteristics.

Secondly, in terms of the issues of processes which create the system of culture in a particular community, it is necessary to emphasize their mutability (Borrelli 1990). It is also important to know that cultural processes involve an unequal negotiation between dominant group and non-dominant group or among individuals. Individuals have different views about particular beliefs even in the same community. It is, therefore, natural that these result in struggle, conflict, or resistance. Therefore, it is important to stress that cultures are not uniform or unchanging expressions of identity, even though the processes whereby the culture of a dominant group is generalized to represent that of a diverse community may make this appear to be the case.

Finally, I shall draw attention to the role of individuals, the persons who have the rights or responsibilities to create their own culture within their own communities. In relation to the issue of generalization discussed above, the importance of the procedural characteristics of culture is pointed out. This cognitive oriented view, which focuses on the non-observable dimension of culture , is supported by Saville-Troike (1989) and Robinson (1985). This 'invisible fluid' or fuzzy aspect of culture also reflects its socio-cultural reality within the society. As Saville-Troike points out, in the process of creating culture, individual members of a community negotiate relations, outcomes and meanings in order to construct new realities and meanings. That is, many individuals' contributions and negotiations are valuably integrated in the creation of each

collective culture, even if not equally so. This aspect should not be neglected, as culture never exists independently of individuals' thoughts, and no static facts can be taught as culture. As Borrelli (1990) notes:

> Culture must also be equated with a thinking experience.
> Thinking is a constitutive part of the human being.
> Culture can always and only find its content and inner
> sense in connection with the human experience.
> (Borrelli 1990: 284)

Borrelli's analysis emphasises the complexity of social experiences encountered by individuals, and stresses their importance for approaches to culture. On the other hand, Koyama (1992) puts more emphasis on the role of the individuals in shaping their interpretation of the social environment and states that individuals are free to interpret how people acquire some knowledge of its scenarios. As she points out, how individual members of a particular society choose to schematise their cultural practices needs to be respected. Shared cultural characteristics can thus be viewed as a reflection of a shared schematic model. As Murata (1994) has pointed out,

> ..... the degree of cultural difference might be judged
> on the basis of how much schematic knowledge
> people share. (Murata 1994: 112)

In this section, I have looked at several features of culture in order to investigate its nature. As Robinson (1985) has suggested, these notions broadly fall into two categories. One is 'culture as observable phenomena such as customs.' Another is 'culture as not observable, which is the underlying structure or rules in cross-cultural communication'. We need to understand both aspects in order to analyse the behaviour and values of different groups within a large society and reach an understanding of how individuals continually create their own culture, in other words, how cultural systems reproduce themselves and interface with one another.

1.2 Culture and Communication

The relationship between culture and communication is indivisible. In cross-cultural interaction, it is inevitable that participants from different cultural backgrounds think differently, hold different attitudes and also have different expectations. Therefore, it is necessary for us to know not only linguistic rules or shared rules for interaction but also the cultural knowledge that is the basis for the given context of communicative events. In that interactional process, the effectiveness of communication is dependent on the extent to which beliefs and values are shared; therefore successful communication between participants cannot exist outside their specific socio-cultural context. Likewise, communicative and cultural behaviour are "intricately chained together" (Neustuphy 1987). Hudson (1980) considers communication as the 'art of identity' and also suggests that the psychological ties of immediate groups are invariablly strong enough to guarantee adherence to its speech patterns. Gudykunst (1988) also refers to the relationship between identity and communication, and states that identity formation and management occur through communication. Thus, in the context of inter-cultural communication, in which people face cultural differences, a valuable opportunity emerges to develop an enhanced awareness of one's own identity, and that of others. In addition, the way individuals communicate can transform the culture they share from the bottom up. In other words, cultural beliefs are exchanged and naturally developed in the process of communication and the use of language at the individual level. Therefore, we need to be aware that a language, rather than representing a 'neutral' channel of communication, is an integral part of culture.

Finally, cultural diversity must be considered in the context of human migration. This tendency makes it difficult to consider any culture genuinely homogeneous. For Japan, a country for

which this claim is often made, the influence of an ethnically and linguistically distinct indigenous population in Hokkaido (the Ainu), residents who are descendents of Chinese and Korean immigrants; emigrants to South America, and an island population influenced by American occupation, all make this claim difficult to sustain. This would tend to lend support to Foley's (1997) claim that no culture is homogeneous, all are marked by internal divisions, diverse groupings with competing interests, and as a result, cultures continually change as these competing groups strive to advance their interests. In the case of Japan, the influence of a dominant ethnic or linguistic group thus does not suggest homogeneity, but rather as Creighton (1997) has observed;

> Internationalization prompts an acceptance of social and cultural diversity, something at odds with the value. Japan currently places on social and cultural homogeneity. The linked association of *soto* [outside] others and *uchi* [inside] others means that as Japan reconsiders its identity in relationship to foreigners, it must also reflect on its own minorities and assertions of homogeneity. (Creighton 1997: 233)

Such circumstances require, on the part of the dominant group, new ways of relating not only to those from outside Japan, but also to marginalised groups within the country.

Japan's minorities

Here, I discuss this issue referring to the existence of *Nikkei-jin*, Korean, Chinese people and *the Okinawan.* The *Nikkei-jin,* returned descendants of Japanese who emigrated abroad (specifically to Brazil and Peru) between 1868 and 1973 as foreign migrant workers, are considered as a minority group in Japan because ethnically they are not considered to share a common cultural heritage with the Japanese who never lived outside Japan. As Shellek (1997) points out, the presence of *Nikkei-jin* also provides an opportunity to reconsider what it means to be 'Japanese.'

In addition, attitudes to *Nikkei-jin* also raise questions about the ideological boundary which separates the majority Japanese from certain national minorities within Japan. Shelleck (1997) also gives another example which raises the issue of what we mean by the word 'Japanese.'

> If we further compare the stereotypical Korean and Chinese permanent residents in Japan (who do not share Japanese lineage or Japanese nationality but share Japanese culture and language and are, therefore, sociologically 'Japanese.') or the Ainu (an indigenous people who, as a result of a long process of assimilation, share the same nationality and language as majority Japanese but maintain a separate cultural identity), the boundary markers which distinguish between Japanese and foreigners become extremely ambiguous.
>
> (Shelleck 1997: 201)

A further example of a group which is called into question is the Okinawans, who remained under American occupation until 1972. Shelleck claims of cultural homogeneity, while the peace treaty with the Allied powers, though partial, ended the occupation of Japan in 1952. For Taira, the crucial question for Okinawans revolves around how to maintain their own identity in the face of the homogenising values of the dominant group. Thus:

> Subject to the objective reality that Okinawa is part of Japan and that ethnic diversity is not an official Japanese value, the overriding question for Okinawans is how they can maintain a sense of personal integrity under the challenge of a dual, Okinawan-Japanese, identity. (Taira 1997: 164)

As these examples show, the issue of minorities in Japan is a major consideration when referring to the word 'Japanese' or 'Japanese culture.' Furthermore, the rapid internationalization also poses a threat to the Japanese imagination of self by calling into question, assertions of national homogeneity (Creighton 1997:234). However, this ambiguous position might depict the reality of Japan. Will the Japanese keep on excluding any minorities or will gradual transform from rather a homogeneous position to a globalized position be achieved or attempted from now on?

1.3 The concept of West and Orient

As distinctions of Western and Japanese culture and interactional styles will be frequently drawn in this study in relation to the use of silence, it is important to discuss the problematic concepts of West and Orient before proceeding. As binary opposites, these two terms are, of course, defined in relation to each other. Numerous comparisons of the Oriental and Western way of thinking have been alleged from various perspectives such as the scientific, political, historical, and pedagogical view.

> ....., although 'the Orient' may have appeared in Oriental studies to be a term with a concrete referent, a real region of the world with real attributes, in practice it took on meaning only in the context of another term,'West'. And in this process is the tendency to essentialize, to reduce the complex entities that are being compared to a set of core features that express the essence of each entity, but only as it stands in contrast to the other. (Carrier 1995: 3)

It is equally important to be wary of such overgeneralisation in the context of the present study. As Scollon and Scollon (1981, 1983) found in comparing the interactive patterns of Athabaskan and English-speaking Americans, for example, patterns of interaction within Western societies are often characterised by diversity, with very different attitudes and assumptions relating to the use of silence. Similar findings were revealed in a comparative study of Apache and English subjects (Basso 1970), and taken together these would seem to suggest that concepts of Orient and West cannot reliably be predicated on geographical location, as the rather more obviously ambiguous association of Australia with the West also illustrates.

Said (1985) also claims that the 'Orient' was created in relation to the concept 'West.'

> Yet what gave the Oriental's world, its intelligibility and identity was not the result of his own efforts but rather the whole complex series of knowledgeable manipulations by which the Orient was identified by the West. (Said 1978: 40)

Said also raises the issue of the meaning of originality of continuity and also the issue of

transmisison of a culture from generation to generation and notes;

> ..., how can we treat the cultural, historical phenomenon of Orientalism as a kind of willed human work - not of mere unconditional ratiocination - in all its historical complexity, detail and worth without at the same time losing sight of the alliance between cultural work, political tendencies, the state, and the specific realities of domination? (Said 1978: 15)

As he mentions, this highly complicated phenomenon of culture might originate from 'a kind of seeking for willed human work'. That is, it can be said that it (Orient) comes from its own process of searching the self-identity as Orient.

> It [Orientatlism] is rather a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholary, economic, sociological, historical, and philosophical texts; it is an elaboration not only of a whole series of 'interests', which by such means as scholary discovery, sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it is , rather than express, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different world. (Said 1978: 12)

What emerges from these examples is that such categories cannot be considered in isolation from their social, anthropological and historical origins. In the EFL context, it is therefore necessary that the concept of 'West' also needs to be carefully examined in each study. For example, Scollon and Scollon (1981, 1983) report that the Athabaskan way of interaction differs from the English-Speaking American way of interaction in terms of the use of silence. Basso (1970) also reports that there are similar findings between Apache people and English-Speaking Americans. Geographically, the groups mentioned above are situated in the 'West'. Why then is their interactional style not considered as Western? In contrast, Australia is situated in Asia, but the interactional style of the English-Speaking Australian is not considered as Oriental. This is only an example showing the difficulties in defining the concept of West and East. Thus, not only geographical, but also more deeply

integrated various factors such as historical, anthropological and social background have been continuously creating each culture in their own way. Therefore, a simplistic division between West and Orient cannot be made, but the decision should be made in terms of 'the relative difference of segmentary opposition' (Carrier 1995: 6).

Thus, in this study, when the Japanese use of silence in EFL class is compared to the Western use of silence or Western patterns of classroom behaviour, or when cross-cultural interaction style between Japanese learners and Western teachers are mentioned, 'Western' refers to those cultural characteristics which are evident in mainstream North American and some European cultures as well as Australian society in Asia, and some other countries where English is used widely as a major means of communication.

1.4 Universalism vs Cultural Determinism

In the previous sections, I have discussed the concept of culture by examining its nature from various perspectives. Here, I shall discuss the extent to which culture and language learning are related in more detail. In doing so, two different views 'Universalism' and 'Cultural Determinism' are contrasted and examined in relation to the role of culture in language learning contexts.The two approaches explaining the development of human language acquision stand at opposite ends of a continuum. Cultural Determinism emphasizes the significant and essential role of cultural context in developing language acquisition. In contrast, Universalism (Chomsky 1971, 1979, Pinker 1994) completely denies a strong connection between socio-cultural elements and language acquisition and claims that all language acquisition derives from basic common biological programmes. That is, the ability for learning any language is innate even if people learn different languages in different social contexts.

Therefore, they never regard cultural contexts as an important and necessary resource for

language learning. For example, Pinker (1995) strongly denies the role of culture in language learning and states;

> Language is not a cultural artifact that we learn the way to tell time or how the federal government works. Instead, it is a distinct piece of the biological makeup of our brains. Language is a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently. (Pinker 1995: 18)

Thus, from this universalistic and scientific point of view, he regards the complexity of language as 'part of our birthright' which is not something that parents or teachers teach their children or students or something that must be elaborated in school (Pinker 1995). This 'biological determinism' views social and psychological ideas as a fusion. This is because the social and psychological perspectives see that human behaviour is determined by culture, an autonomous system of symbols and values. As key counter claims, Universalists emphasize three points. First, they put emphasis upon the importance of an innate mental mechanism to acquire grammar and also claim that this acquisition would not be possible without it. For example, Chomsky (1971) claims that we can predict that a direct attempt to account for the actual behaviour of the speaker, the listener, and the learner, not based on a prior understanding of the structure of grammars, will achieve very limited success. Secondly, they also claim that a sense of 'similarity' must be innate as an unavoidable implication and also as a simple logic. As an example, they put forward the example of the child's generalization in developing speaking ability, which is computed by the Universal Grammar built into the learning mechanisms and also say that the child would have no way of correctly generalizing without innate computation. Thirdly, Pinker (1995) argues that cultural and psychological approaches for human language

acquisition fail to show reliable discovery that could bear on the self-evident truth that ethically, all people are created equal. Moreover, Chomsky also points out the lack of validity or empirical evidence of cultural determinism on language acquisition as follows:

> ....., it seems that there is neither empirical evidence nor any known argument to support any specific claim about the relative importance of 'feedback' from the environment and the 'independent contribution of the organism' in the process of language acquisition.
> (Chomsky 1971: 139)

He also points out the theoretical weakness of linguists or psycholinguists to approach the problems of language teaching from a principled point of view and states;

> ..., it is difficult to believe that either linguistics, or psychology has achieved a level of theoretical understanding that might enable it to support a 'technology of language teaching.'
> (Chomsky 1971: 153)

Chomsky then goes on to say that there is no real debate about the validity of functionalism in the general evolution of the species and there is also no sensible way to invoke functional notions as explanatory concepts at the synchronic level (Chomsky 1979). Thus, for Chomsky (1979) biological and evolutionary processes are considered the only legitimate areas of enquiry for the development of language teaching approaches.

These claims raise a number of important issues to be discussed. In relation to the concept of innately determined design features, while such features may exist, they do not offer an explanation of the processes which enables knowledge of the system to be transformed into actual language use or, to use Chomsky's terms, the relationship of competence to performance. Clearly, this relationhip is of central importance to language teaching, and is an area which has traditionally been neglected. As Widdowson has pointed out:

> The assumption that the language teacher appears to make is that once this basis is provided, then the learner will have no difficulty

> in dealing with the actual use of language: that is to say, that once the competence is acquired, performance will take care of itself.
> (Widdowson 1983: 89)

According to Widdowson, this assumption can result in the development of learners, who, while demonstrating proficiency in terms of systemic knowledge, are unable to deploy these skills in requisite social situations. Thus, whatever claims are made concerning Universal Grammar, these are of little assistance in enabling the language learner to make use of this systemic knowledge in social contexts.

For Labov (1972), this implies that the line of linguistic enquiry proposed by Chomsky should be reversed, and that rather than beginning from the premise of idealized speech communities, and then searching for invariant features, the role of linguists is rather to examine language in its social context, and explore differences between, within and across them.

It is this perspective which I will broadly seek to adopt in this investigation. Thus, rather than taking an idealized standpoint, and attempting to propose scientific generalisations, the function of this enquiry is to focus on, and hopefully to reach an understanding of, linguistic and extra-linguistic behaviour in context. This contextual grounding is therefore considered crucial to the development of insights into the processes at work in actual language use. As Labov (1972) suggests:

> The rules we need will show how things are done with words and how one interprets these utterances as actions: in other words, relating what is done to what is said and what is said to what is done.
> (Labov 1972: 54-55)

Thus, rather than extrapolating universal concepts via a process of introspection, this study is concerned principally with the use of language in specific circumstances.

1.5 Cross-cultural communication and language learning

The close relationship between culture, communication and social context was discussed in the previous section. Whenever communication takes place, whether inter-personal within a particular community or inter- cultural, there is always a potential for misunderstanding, as individuals have their own unique background or schemata. Clearly, the degree of correspondence between these schemata might affect communication. Sarbaugh (1990) visualizes the inter / intra cultural distinction by letting two circles respect the life experiences of two persons or groups. If the circles have minimal overlap (representing minimal similarity of experience), the two persons would be near the heterogeneous end of the continuum.

On the other hand, if the circles have maximum overlap, the two persons would be near the homogeneous end of the continuum. This homogeneity-heterogeneity distinction may be helpful in classifying communication across generations, genders or cultures. The classification of intercultural or intracultural communication in this case will depend on the degree of correspondence between experiences, and on the transactions these persons have produced. In that sense, cultural differences can be seen as one of the key elements which distinguishes two continua. On the other hand, Gudykunst (1988) sees inter-cultural communication as more problematic and asserts:

> When individuals identify a conversational partner as culturally different, the negotiation process becomes more complex. Intercultural communication is a process of comparisons, judgements, descriptions and negotiations of both persons' identities. One's own cultural identity may include stereotypes, opinions and norms about other cultural groups that have been passed down and are then, modified and negotiated in intercultural contact.
>
> (Gudykunst 1988: 41)

If we distinguish inter-cultural from intra-cultural communication, the following question arises

: what are the implications of these complex sets of relationships for the study of cross-cultural

interaction?

In the next section, I shall look at several issues raised in inter-cultural communication from the pedagogical perspective of second language learning, and consider possible approaches to overcome those difficulties in the EFL context. I shall also consider the aim of second language learning in relation to cross-cultural communication.

Firstly, I shall discuss two significant pedagogical issues: those of 'awareness-raising' and 'stereotyping.' I shall address the question: When we communicate cross-culturally, how far are we aware of the influence of our own cultural assumptions, and to what extent do we consciously communicate across cultures with sensitivity to others'cultural backgrounds? Yule (1996) explains our tendency not to be fully aware of cultural differences in cross-cultural interaction.

> For some obvious differences (appearance, visible things), we can readily modify (recognize) the details of a cultural schemata. But for many other subtle differences, we often don't recognize that there may be a misinterpretation based on different schemata. (Yule 1996: 87)

Borrelli (1990) takes Yule's point further, adding that 'The validity and obviousness of [a speaker's] thoughts and deeds that he does not recognize is his own bias.' What emerges from these observations is that we usually communicate across cultures without being conscious of the potential misunderstanding or discomfort.

In shifting our focus to the classroom situation, it is interesting to note that despite the increasingly multicultural nature of foreign language classrooms, it is doubtful how conscious either teachers or learners are of the socio-culturally generated misunderstandings in class. Thus, a limited understanding makes the EFL classroom more a complex and confused environment because the essential quality of 'cultural awareness' in EFL is missing.

It is also necessary for us to take the use of classroom activities into consideration. This is because classroom activities run the risk of becoming rather one-sided, stressing the importance of the target culture and denying the validity of learner's own cultural practices. This may result from a lack of cultural awareness predicated on the fact that, as Buttjes (1990) states, cultural identities have been shaped as members of a specific gender, social class, religion or nation long before we are aware of these formative influences. Therefore, what is at issue here is the need for 'a modification of monocultural awareness' (Byram 1990), to encourage both learners and teachers to step out from their own culture, and to adopt more positive and broad minded attitudes towards cross-cultural communication. Byram (1990) sees the function of this promotion of cultural awareness as the facilitator of a change of attitudes and concepts, and a modification of cultural-specific schemata. As both Byram and Buttjes point out, it is necessary to make the constraints of the individual and the society both more susceptible to analysis and amenable to change.

I shall now discuss the important issue of overgeneralization which is based on the projection of the native culture unto the target culture or, more noticable effects of stereotyping. In the first of these processes, the unconscious effects of schematic assumptions can be composed by a lack of cultural self-awareness. As Suzuki suggests,

> Most people are totally unaware of their culture. People tend to assume that items existing in their culture are in themselves endowed with absolute and therefore universal values.
> (Suzuki 1978: 13)

As Suzuki points out, it is reasonable to suggest that these cultural assumptions often lead us to misinterpret messages we receive from people who come from different cultural backgrounds, and also lead people who are from different cultural backgrounds to misinterpret messages they receive from us. This kind of cross-cultural misunderstanding results from our

use of our own preexisting cultural knowledge, 'cultural schemata', to interpret the signals of someone from another culture. Therefore, it can be considered that this kind of stereotyping is a natural phenomenon which takes place unconsciously, especially in early cross-cultural encounters as it is the only world that the person will know and use to communicate. Consider, for example, an instance of the following interaction between a Japanese student and a British teacher. The student shows his respect through attentive and careful listening without interruption. However, the teacher interprets the interaction negatively. Though she realizes that the student lets her take initiative maximally and with deference, and may even be aware that he seemed comfortable to do so, the teacher is still uncomfortable and rather confused. Her confusion lasts until it is explained that the student's behaviour is a way of showing respect to the teacher, and that attentive listening is considered a key element of successful communication in his culture.

This raises the interesting question of whether explicit knowledge of cultural differences can alleviate misunderstandings, characteristic of cross-cultural communication. I will take this question up later. For now, it seems that misinterpretation occured, in spite of the best efforts of the participants. As Byram (1990) points out, it would be short-sighted to assume that the first language of learners and their schematic knowledge cannot be used to help learners draw contrasts and make connections with the target culture, and rather suggests that learners should use their schemata in order to increase the capacities for understanding and dealing with new phenomena by modifying and expanding their previous knowledge. He also suggests that this process is experienced by learners as 'second socialization.' It seems that the learners of a second language have both advantages and disadvantages associated with already knowing something about language and culture.

One of these advantages is that learners can use generalizations about how to produce utterances and how to behave in certain situations to start or set up a relationship with others from different backgrounds. In addition, as Scollon and Scollon (1995) point out, stereotypes can be positive as well as negative; they suggest that 'positive stereotypes' can act as a starting point for better understanding between two participants from different backgrounds. If such positive mutual stereotypes work well, and participants from different socio-cultural backgrounds can find common ground, then cross-cultural communication could benefit. However, there is, as always the danger of overgeneralisation, and of emphasising similarities between members of a given cultural group at the expense of recognising diversity between individuals. For example, as Scollon and Scollon (1995) point out, positive stereotyping has a role of helping learners to understand each other better, but also has problems by seeing members of different groups as being identical. That means, if having a single and rather too focused analysis or view is adopted in cross-cultural communication, it would lead to unconscious misunderstanding, even though participants' attitudes might be relatively positive by considering others as unity. Now, let us look at the other side, 'negative stereotypes.' According to Scollon and Scollon (1995), this type of stereotype is always a negative biased view of thinking. Even though the ways of viewing others are slightly different, the common problem here is that both types of stereotypes will blind us to real differences that exist between us. It also limits our understanding of unique individual behaviour across cultures. It is likely to draw concrete images of others as if they were the definite way of viewing them. As Swiderski (1993) states, we should be fully aware that having rigid expectations can be merely knowledge about others. Thus, whether stereotypes are positive or negative, they share a tendency to produce fixed mental images which do not account for diversity or change. Sarbaugh (1990), is also able to identify positive aspects of stereotyping, and views it as "common defence for reducing culture shock".

However, the kinds of reductive labelling characteristic of the stereotype tend to oversimplify the complex and ambiguous nature of cross-cultural encounters, and exonerate participants from the responsibility of attempting to negotiate shared understandings through adaptation to the new environment.Therefore, it is beholden on those engaged in cross-cultural communication to develop a more sophisticated conception of the target culture, involving a recognition both of individual differences, and the mutual obligations necessary to reach a shared understanding. One of the most crucial differences between the crude stereotype, and a more sophisticated awareness of cultural diversity is that while the former may be able to identify aspects of the target culture which are at variance with those of the native culture, the latter seeks also to explain them. Such an understanding is ideally facilitated through contact with the target culture in a wide range of circumstances, accompanied by an approach which seeks to identify areas of difference, and ground them within their given cultural context. In order to achieve this, it is first necessary to develop an awareness of ones own cultural assumptions, in order to be in a position to adopt an analytical approach to new situations.

1.6 Language Learning: aims and approaches

It is now necessary to consider what is needed for language learners to be able to communicate successfully. In other words, what elements are essential for both teachers and learners to be independent, conscious analysts and communicators in cross-cultural interaction? Cultural clashes cannot be completely eliminated; however, we can try to minimize these misunderstandings by being aware of differences through experience, so that we can understand cultural differences and value, uniqueness and diversity. I shall discuss a number of stages which are indispensable for effective cross-cultural communication. I shall discuss this in terms of the

importance of experience of comparative analysis and dealing with difficulties, understanding differences and developing an appreciation of difference and the individual choice in cross-cultural interaction.

Firstly, through maximized experience both in and outside class, both learners and teachers need to be aware of differences across cultures, and not only to anticipate what other participants from different cultural backgrounds would say in a certain context, but also why they would act in that way. In order to foster this attitude, critical comparison and dealing with difficulties or confusion caused by socio-cultural differences through maximized experience need to be encouraged. This is because when we interact cross-culturally, critical comparisons between us and others are helpful in developing an analytical attitude towards the new situation. This is not to judge which is better or worse but to read others' intentions more precisely and consciously by continuously asking 'Why is it so?' Through this shared exploration, of values, our sensitivity towards others will be cultivated. In addition, the experience of 'culture shock' can provide positive opportunities for us of interpreting ways to interpret the behaviour or intentions of others, while at the same time developing a better understanding of how we are viewed by others. This will enable us to understand why certain behaviours are used in specific contexts. In a way, to attach meanings to the behaviour of others can thus be conceived of as a process of self-discovery. Uncertainty and confusion are thus viewed as universal phenomena to be coped with, and , teachers should therefore not hesitate to stimulate this kind of confusion in class as it can provide a real motivation to communicate as an important first step. However, such approaches need to be considered with great care so that individual learners are not discouraged as Gudykunst (1991) has pointed out:

> Attempts to deal with the unfamiliarity of new situations involve a pattern of information seeking (uncertainty

> reduction) and tension (anxiety).
>
> (Gudykunst 1991: 3)

Clearly, excessive levels of anxiety and confusion are liable to be counter-productive.

Having outlined some of the benefits of facilitating an awareness of cultural phenomena, it is necessary to establish which tools the learner requires in order to approach such a task. In doing so, it is important to emphasise that awareness and understanding does not imply assimilation, which is usually neither possible or desirable as a goal in relation to the target culture. In this context, it is worth noting that the maintenance of a strong sense of personal identity is crucial to the development of enlightened attitudes towards cultural diversity. This is implicit in Smith's prerequisites for cross-cultural understanding:

> 1. a sense of self
> 2. a sense of other
> 3. a sense of the relationship between self and the other
> 4. a sense of the setting or social situation
> 5. a sense of the goal or objective
>
> (Smith 1987: 3)

According to this view, in order to understand others, while obtaining information through interaction, we need to observe carefully what is happening in a particular setting and analyse our own reactions and those of others. When exchanging information, we also need to comprehend whether interaction involves mutual agreement, disagreement, misunderstanding, confusion or enjoyment. If misinterpretation or misunderstanding takes place because of the gap caused by mutually different intentions, or interpretations, we also need the ability to clarify why it happened in order to resolve the problem. In the list above, Smith (1987) implies the importance of knowing ourselves and others and the relationship between the two, in order to develop empathetic relationships with others.

One important component in developing this understanding, as Sarbaugh (1990) has

suggested, involves an awareness of different experiences of time, including those of our own culture. Clearly these attitudes are likely to be reflected in the dynamics of discourse, and have important implications for conversational analysis, and the function of silence in such areas as turn-taking. As Sarbaugh suggests, perhaps referring particularly to encounters between participants with western and eastern orientations:

> We tend to jump to conclusions. We must learn to take time, to involve not only ourselves but the other person. We must learn to respect these phases in the encounter and allow the other person enough time to utilise those periods. We should try to cultivate the necessary patience that will offer us and the other person the time needed to think through and explore feelings. (Sarbaugh 1990: 392)

At the same time, it is also important to avoid adopting a problem-centred approach to cultural diversity. In this sense, the process of transcending cultural barriers can be viewed as a positive learning experience involving self-discovery, as well as the development of an understanding of the target culture and its people. The broader implications of such understandings, in terms of their positive repercussions for conflict resolution at individual and global levels are, clear. As Smith (1987) has noted:

> The greater the involvement and understanding of self and the other, the greater the possibility of genuinely negotiated meaning which is acceptable to all parties involved. (Smith 1987: 5)

Thus, at an individual level, it is important for messages to be constructed in such a way that strangers can understand what they mean. The need to facilitate such effective communication is clearly a responsibility of second language learning and teaching, and one which too narrow a focus on de-contextualised language abdicates. As Kramsch has pointed out:

> Teaching a language is teaching how to shape the context of the 'lesson' as an individual learning event and as a social encounter with regard to its setting. The way context is shaped through foreign language determines the types of

> meaning the students will be allowed to explore, discover and exchange. The more potential meanings they are encouraged to discover, the richer the opportunities for learning. (Kramsch 1992: 5)

1.7 Discussion of Pragmatics and the approach in this study

In the previous section, I examined the nature of culture by referring to several key features such as its complexity and diversity. The relationship between culture and communication was examined with reference to language teaching and intercultural communication. Issues such as stereotyping or the place of identity were also discussed. In this section, I shall concentrate on examining the nature of Pragmatics in relation to the study of cross-cultural communication. This involves an examination of the nature of pragmatic aspects of cross-cultural communication, and, in particular, the role of silence in these encounters, as well as considering how this may be influenced by factors associated with face and politeness, and how these reflect different approaches to conversational management.

1.8 The definition of Pragmatics

Although a number of definitions of pragmatics have been offered, they generally share an emphasis on the interpretation of speaker meaning, as distinct from word or sentence meaning, which is more closely identified with semantics. Yule (1996), identifies the following four components of such pragmatic communication: Pragmatics is 1) the study of speaker meaning 2) the study of contextual meaning which involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said 3) the study of how more gets communicated than is said, the investigation of invisible meaning, and lastly, 4) the study of the expression of relative distance. It seems that there are several different approaches to Pragmatics as the principles suggested by Yule show, along with the first principle of Pragmatics proposed by Yule (1996), Hatch (1992) also defines Pragmatics as the study of what

speakers mean to convey when they use a particular structure in a context.

From another perspective, Mey (1994) regards Pragmatics as the study of how the context influences what is said, which seems to relate more closely to Yule's second principle:

> Pragmatics is the study of the conditions of
> human language uses as these are determined
> by the context of society. (Mey1994: 42)

Moreover, there are the approaches which regard Pragmatics as requiring a much wider and deeper study of human interaction. This approach seems to be a feature of the third aspect identified by Yule. For example, Schiffrin (1994) sees Pragmatics as the study of how interpreters engage in the 'taking-account-of' designata (the construction of interpretants) of sign-vehicles (1994: 99). Furthermore, Ellis (1995) also emphasizes the importance of examining the way in which formal properties are used in actual communication. That is, this approach tries to see how people communicate in relation to one another, but not only looking at the speaker's meaning, as Wierzbicka (1991) considers Pragmatics as the discipline studying linguistic interaction between 'I' and 'You'. She also goes on to emphasize the point that we need to understand 'interactional meanings expressed in speech. Here, the intention of a speaker and the interpretation of a listener as a receiver and the expressed meaning and its inter-relationship are referred in its use. Their approaches seem to focus on the intended and interpreted meaning of the usage.

On the other hand, Thomas (1995) puts more focus on 'meaning' itself and defines Pragmatics as 'meaning in interaction' and specifies those meanings in relation to the negotiation process of interlocutors. Referring to the cross-cultural communication breakdown, Thomas (1983:91) also has given the term 'pragmatic failure' to the inability to understand 'what is meant by what is said.' She views meaning as something which is not inherent in the words alone, nor

the sole property of the speaker or the hearer. Making meaning is rather viewed as a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between the speaker and the hearer, the context of an utterance (physical, social, and linguistic) and the meaning potential of an utterance. Her approach explaining the nature of Pragmatics is much clearer than Mey's, as it takes the process of interaction into account.

Leech's Approach

Let us look in more detail at two particularly influential attempts to establish a universal framework for the study of Pragmatics: Leech's (1983) and Levinson's (1983).

Leech regards Pragmatics as 'rhetoric' which is the study of the effective use of language in communication. According to Leech, the term 'rhetoric' puts a focus on a goal-oriented speech situation, in which the speaker uses language in order to produce a particular effect in the mind of the hearer. Therefore, Leech sees the principles of Pragmatics as fundamentally concerned with conversational goals which are considered in terms of 'problems and their solutions.' Leech also views Pragmatics as 'interpersonal' and suggests that language functions as an expression of one's attitudes and an attempt to influence the attitudes and behaviour of the hearer. While Leech is certainly correct to point out the importance of conversational goal, other aspects of his approach prove less convincing. For example, his exclusion of non-verbal aspects (Leech 1983:11) seems to place unnecessary restrictions on the scope of his analysis.

Although Leech claims that linguistic behaviour is learned by each individual, and is passed on by cultural transmissions, the fact that Leech discusses Pragmatics in Universal terms, and in isolation from language and culture-specific aspects results in an unnecessarily circumscribed framework.

Levinson's Approaches to Pragmatics

Levinson (1983) attempts to define Pragmatics from several perspectives. He considers

there to be both a diversity of possible definitions and lack of clear boundaries. Morris (1938) sees Pragmatics as the study of 'the relation of signs to interpreters' (cited in Levinson 1983: 6). He also defines Pragmatics as the study of language from a functional perspective. One of the main characteristics of this approach to Pragmatics is an emphasis on sequential interaction for the study of human communication.

> We shall need to include participants' beliefs about most of the above parameters, including the place of the current utterance within the sequence of utterances that makes up the discourse. (Levinson 1983: 10)

As Murata (1994) suggets, this approach recognizes the importance of insights from conversational analysis to an understanding of the nature of human interaction, covering such areas as turn-taking and including the use of silence. In the next section, I shall discuss how the use of silence is studied in Pragmatics, and examine which approaches are relevant to the present study.

In considering definitions of pragmatics, a number of aspects emerge which are of importance in relation to the present study; the speaker's intention, the listener's interpretation, the effect of context in the negotiating meaning, what is conveyed through non-verbal communication between participants. None of these can be excluded in developing an understanding of human communication.

1.9 The role of silence in Pragmatics

When we consider the role of silence in communication in relation to Pragmatics, how can we define its role in interaction? Leech (1983:13) refers to the use of silence in interaction both positively and negatively in terms of politeness. As for its negative aspect, Leech states,

> If one has been engaged in conversation with someone else, silence is a sign of opting out of a social engagement to observe the interpersonal rhetorical principles, and in many circumstances as a form of impoliteness.
>
> (Leech 1983: 141)

However, Leech (1983) considers that it is inadequate to see the use of silence only from the negative perspective. He also regards the use of silence in interaction as positive when common ground of experience and attitude is shared. Thus, he indicates that there are both negative and positive uses of silence. However, he has a rather limited view of looking at the use of silence in interaction by specifying a situation which is also rather abstract. On the other hand, Levinson (1983:299) classifies silence-the absence of vocalization- into three pragmatic possibilities ; 1) a gap between turns, 2) a lapse, and 3) a significant or attributable in terms of the conversational rules proposed by Sacks (1974). His approach which attempts to look at the use of silence from different perspectives, attributes additional dimensions to silence in interaction. However, the role of silence referred to in this approach is rather broad and we need to examine how the existence or the use of silence contributes to the interaction in more specific ways. In this context, it is useful to look at Hurley's (1992) definition of pragmatics which refers to the role of prosodic and non-verbal factors in communication, and explores how meaning is encoded into or decoded from a sign or set of signs with reference to the context of a given communication. He also points out the traditional limitation of Pragmatics when applied to the purely verbal component of communication. In so doing, Hurley suggests that Pragmatics must take account of non-verbal communication as well such as paralinguistics or prosody, the use of different velocities, tone, pitch variations and silences in speaking to convey meaning as being closely related to proxemics and kinesics. Smith (1987) also emphasizes the importance of looking at the aspects of non-verbal communication in Pragmatics.

Recognition is needed that such things as the place of silence in

> conversation are usually not the same across cultures. These presuppositions are not taken for granted and are usually at a low level of awareness. (Smith 1987: 120)

However, it should not be neglected that there are some issues which make the research on non-verbal communication difficult. Firstly, there are no widely accepted norms for interpreting non-verbal behaviour and such behaviour is difficult to capture and describe as text. Cook (1990: 4) also mentions that it is hard to see how features can be analysed that cannot be in some measure transcribed. Further, he claims that the meaning of discourse which is in all respects physically identical will be different when viewed from different physical or psychological angles. Thus, there are difficulties in assigning a discrete meaning to each expression of non-verbal behaviour. Nevertheless, it is clear that non-verbal communication has a significant role in conveying meaning. There are cases in which the use of gestures or silences make us communicate more successfully and effectively. Thus, in order to investigate its role, we need to look at contextual factors in interaction and also to raise awareness of social and pragmatic factors in the use of non-verbal communication across cultures. In doing so, it will be possible to investigate the role of silence as part of 'the physical delivery system of speech.' The use of gestures in conjunction with the use of silence will be considered central to this study of Pragmatics.

In addressing interaction in cross-cultural contexts, it is necessary to examine which approach is valuable in order to understand its nature and the meanings conveyed. Wierzbicka (1991) and Clancy (1994) point out that we need to be conscious of the fact that across cultures people speak differently and these differences reflect different cultural values or at least different hierarchies of values. Wierzbicka refers to the different value placed on consensus in Jewish culture which displays a clear preference for disagreement and states that it is an Anglo

eccentric illusion to think that all cultures value agreement more than disagreement. As she points out, different cultural values and cultural priorities exist.

Therefore, it is necessary to investigate and explain different communicative styles in specific contexts independently. Thus, in this study, the use of silence in a Japanese context will be investigated by examining its relationship to Japanese cultural values. However, it is also important that different cultural priorities or values need to be explained in a comprehensible way which people of different cultural backgrounds can understand by explaining what the specific term means including its concept or notion in its socio-cultural context.

1.10 Politeness as Pragmatics -Face Work-

Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987) regard politeness as a pragmatic phenomenon and they interpret it as a strategy employed by a speaker to achieve a variety of goals, notably the maintainance of harmonious relations. Mey (1994) also views politeness in similar terms as a strategy for co-operation with least cost and maximum benefit to all interlocutors. Therefore, politeness can be viewed as crucial in explaining why people use certain strategies in conveying meaning (Leech 1983). Hurley (1992) has also emphasized the importance of the relationship between politeness theories and the study of Pragmatics. This is because politeness theories attempt to explain how and why people in different cultures establish, maintain, or support social relations by using language. As Clyne (1994) points out, the influential work of Brown and Levinson (1987) provided an adequate general theoretical basis for a model of social interaction. In Brown and Levinson, politeness is explained as polite social behaviour and 'face' as a person's image of their own public self. Furthermore, they divided public-self image into 'negative face' and 'positive face.' 'Negative face' according to Brown and Levinson, represents

an expression of the need to be independent, to have freedom of action, and not to be imposed on by others. On the other hand, 'Positive face' is the need to be accepted, and to be treated as a member of the group.

However, recently the universal validity of Brown & Levinson's theory has been doubted by some Japanese scholars as far as the use of 'Negative Politeness' in the Japanese context is concerned and also because of its lack of consideration of some aspects of non-Western cultures. For example, Scollon and Scollon (1995) claim that the idea of 'self'which underlies Western studies of communication is highly individualistic. They point out that in many cultures, the concept of 'negative face' is irrelevant. In Japanese culture, for example, where low individuality is highly valued, 'indirectness' is interpreted as an expression of 'negative face'. Also, while, according to Brown and Levinson (1978), the notion of negative face indicates that a higher level of indirectness necessarily reflects greater social distance between participants and is always perceived as being more polite. However, in Chinese and Persian societies, speaking politely consists, to a great extent, of 'lowering' oneself and 'exalting' the hearer, rather than resorting to indirectness.

A similar strategy can be observed in Japanese culture, where politeness requires the speaker to be fully aware of the relative social position of all interactants, mainly through the use of inflections. There are areas noted by Japanese linguists in which Brown & Levinson's notion of negative politeness is considered problematic (Y.Matsumoto, 1988,1989, 1997 Ide, 1989, Maynard, 1989, Nakano 1995). One example derives from the use of Japanese formulaic expressions and honorifics as negative politeness strategies. Referring to this phenomenon, Matsumoto (1988) emphasises the Japanese lack of concern for individual territory as a major cultural preoccupation.

> Japanese in-group language use is marked by the members' interdependence rather than independence. What is of paramount concern to a Japanese is not his or her own territory, but the position in relation to the others in the group and his or her acceptance by those others.
> (Y.Matsumoto 1988: 405)

Foley (1997) also states that Brown and Levinson's division of face into positive and negative face is untenable for East-Asian cultures since their framework derives from the importance given to individualism in the Western European concept of the person.

Similarly, Nakano (1995) points out that Brown and Levinson's 'Negative Politeness' concept fails to adequately account for the Japanese interdependent relationship which emphasize social ties and relative positioning, and states that;

> Layers of formality in Japanese come from 'discernment (*Wakimae)*', which acknowledges one's place or role in a setting according to social convention. Therefore, the use of honorifics is not protecting the addressee's territory by raising his or her position, as Brown and Levinson state, but is acknowledging the difference in status between the participants. (Nakano 1995: 230-231)

Thomas (1995) on the other hand, sees Japanese use of honorifics above as 'deference' and distinguishes this from Politeness.

> It [deference] refers to the respect we show to other people by virtue of their higher status, greater age, etc. Politeness is a more general matter of showing (or rather, of giving the appearance of showing) considerations to others.
> (Thomas 1995: 150)

In referring to Ide's discussion of honorifics and politeness, Thomas emphasises the obiligatory nature of honorific selection and stresses that this reflects a sense of place and social convention.

Thus , she adds:

> If the use of a particular form is obligatory in a particular situation, it is of no significance pragmatically, it is only when there is a choice, or when a speaker attempts to bring about change by challenging the current norms, that the use

> of deferent or non-deferent forms becomes of interest to Pragmatics. (Thomas 1995: 152)

Furthermore, Ting-Toomey (1988) also points out the weakness of cross-cultural studies which challenges a Universal framework of Pragmatics and says:

> Most cross-cultural conflict studies remain on a descriptive level of national culture differences, while the theoretical underpinnings why cultural members choose certain conflict strategies over others remain thin and unpersuasive.
> (Ting-Toomey 1988: 223)

In fairness, Brown and Levinson (1987) also admit that their framework begs a great number of questions, and acknowledge that it has been challenged on grounds as different as conceptual impossibility, psychological implausibility and cultural bias (Brown and Levinson 1987:7). Nevertheless, they maintain that a Universal framework of Pragmatics needs to be sought as a necessary entity to an understanding of human interaction across cultures.

> We simply do not know, for example, the extent to which conversational organization is universal, although preliminary findings point to extensive parallels. The search for universals in language usage should be a major research objective: without such knowledge, the claims of cultural peculiarities in language use cannot be properly assessed, while with it the possibility of functional accounts of universal linguistic properties arises.
> (Brown and Levinson 1987: 48)

For Nakano (1995), establishing the degree to which pragmatic phenomena are universal depends upon an examination of both universal and culture specific aspects of communication, as too narrow a focus on the former may lead to an overemphasis of similarity, just as a focus on the latter may ignore universal aspects. She asserts that such an approach requires an examination of politeness theory in a variety of cultural contexts.

That is, as Wierzbicka (1997) claims, a basic framework for the study of cross-cultural communication is needed.

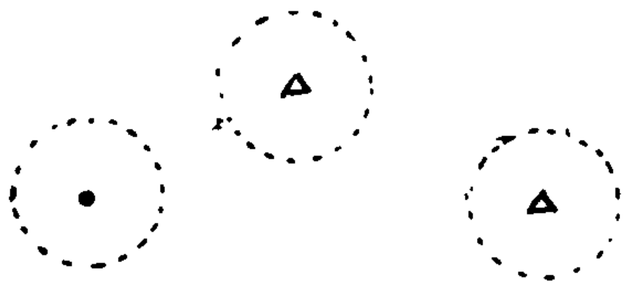
Progress in cross-cultural communication will not be born

> out of slogans emphasizing only heterogeneity and changeability of cultures and denying the reality of different cultural norms and patterns. Progress in cross-cultural understanding requires a basis in well-founded studies of different cultural norms and historically transmitted patterns of meaning.
>
> (Wierzbicka 1997: 21)

Nakano and Matsumoto's arguments suggest that specific cultural circumstances need to be taken into account in analysing the use of Politeness in each context. This is because each culture has core cultural values which are likely to have a profound influence on world aspects of face and politeness.

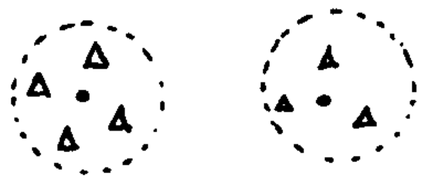
Having examined statements and arguments by several scholars on the universality of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson, it can be recognized that the universal framework is not entirely universal or not applicable to all communicative events in different cultures which have different socio-cultural backgrounds. Especially, referring to the role of face work in a Japanese context, it is true that the Japanese use negative or positive politeness in respect to the relationship with others but not in respect to the protection of their own territory to be independent or dependent. If this social norm which influences actual communicative events, the meaning, function, and value of communicative events will be different.

<u>English context</u>



Territory is kepy by being independent.

<u>Japanese context</u>



Territory is kept by being inter-dependent within a group.

 = own territory • = individual △ = others

The distinct difference on the use of negative or positive politeness between the Western context and in the Japanese context is related to the way in which individuals keep their territory to

save their face. That is, how individuals see themselves in each socio-cultural context. In the Western context, the sense of self as an individual is respected as they grow. On the other hand, in the Japanese context, people grew up with the value of groupism or collectivism. It makes people conscious of the relationship between him- or herself and others. In this respect, the role of face-work itself is a different one although the nature of saving their own face is unchanged.

Thus, I regard Brown and Levinson's universal framework as an important universal concept or notion of face-saving strategy in terms of its fundamental function in any communicative events; to protect self from being harmed by any possible obstacles. However, I also view it as a non-universal framework in terms of the role of face-saving strategy in relation to each social background in different cultures. That is, the Japanese protect themselves by forming a group and by belonging to a group so that an individual or self cannot be isolated from society.

Thus, the use of language in relation to a politeness system needs to be understood and explained in terms of each cultural point of view, however, this integrated approach also needs to allow people from different socio-cultural background's to understand its values in relation to the Universal framework of communication proposed by Brown and Levinson.

Therefore, we need to re-examine how far the theory of the universality of politeness is applicable by looking at the role of 'politeness' or 'face-work' in each culture in relation to the Universal framework. I shall examine more specifically how the concept of 'self' differs across cultures.

This is because understanding the relationship between 'self'and 'other' in each social context is necessary in order to deepen our understanding of polite behaviour and the place of

individuals in its use. In the next section, the role of silence in face-work will also be discussed.

1.11 Silence as face-work -social distance and silence-

Scollon and Scollon (1995) identify face as really a paradoxical concept which has two distinct aspects; 'involvement' and 'independence'. These can be related to the previously discussed concepts of positive and negative face. They explain that the involvement aspect of face is concerned with the person's right and need to be considered a normal and supporting member of a given society. On the other hand, independence can be shown by giving others the widest range of options and by using more formal names and titles. They consider that the most extreme contrast between involvement and independence is the difference between speaking (communication) and silence (non-communication). This is one of the aspects of silence in this sense. However, as they point out there are silences which can be interpreted as high involvement. For example, two people who share a very intimate situation can communicate to each other with a high degree of involvement while remaining completely silent. Here is another example of silence as involvement. In an effective interactional strategy between the boss and employee.

> Kousuke Matsushita (who established the Japanese leading electric company 'Matsushita'), was a proven master of 'ma' (interval, either in the physical sense or in the sense of a pause in conversation which, by its existence, expresses meaning as much as a spoken word; an important concept in Japanese non-verbal communication) are in people-management, seldom orders, but when he says something, everyone listens. Nobody around him is insensitive enough to ask him if his remark is a mere suggestion or an order.
>
> (M. Matsumoto 1988: 53)

According to Matsumoto (1988), the use of 'ma' in this sense is a technique which makes the employee feel that they are the initiator in the company through their attempt to interpret the boss's intention correctly. This is another example of the use of silence as high

involvement and to facilitate meaningful interaction. The use of few words is an effective means of communication and the boss intended invisible meaning to be conveyed. Thus, some implications of the use of silence as face-work can be inferred. Each example depicts different aspects and functions of silence. It seems therefore, that silence can be completely non-communicative or highly communicative depending on social context.

1.12 Face-work and power-relationships

Another significant aspect which needs to be discussed here in relation to the use of silence, is the power relationship between teachers and learners. Scollon and Scollon (1995) propose that there are three main factors involved which bring a politeness or face system into being power, distance, and the weight of the imposition. They explain its system as follows:

> In discussions of face or politeness systems, 'power' refers to the vertical disparity between the participants in a hierarchical structure. The distance between two participants should not be confused with the power difference between them. Distance can be seen most easily in egalitarian relationships. The third factor that will influence face strategies is the weight of the imposition. Even if two participants in a speech event have a very fixed relationship between them, the face strategies they will use will vary depending on how important the topic of discussion is for them. (Scollon and Scollon 1996: 43)

As they maintain, the third factor, 'the weight of the imposition' will differ according to the significance of topic or situation. If the relationship between participants is closer or becomes more distant, the weight will be different. Equally important, in educational contexts, is the expected role of teacher and student and its influence on matters of imposition, power and distance. Thus, as Ellis and Johnson have suggested:

> In certain cultures, such as those of South and South-East Asia, there is a great power distance between teacher and learner, which means that the learner accepts everything the teacher says and expects him or her to make decisions

> and be in control. (Ellis and Johnson 1994: 19)

This statement depicts a dimension of socio-culturally expected classroom behaviour in some Asian countries. That is, students in that context simply talk less, viewing teaching or learning as solidarity. However, taking this phenomenon into account from the Western point of view, it might lead to negative views of students from different societies.

Also, as Sasaki (1996) argues, cultural values and social rules heavily influence the conduct of teachers and students and these factors can lead to a communication breakdown when students and teachers of different cultural backgrounds bring their expectations and codes of conduct into the classroom. In referring to this phenomenon, Archer (1986) uses the term 'culture bump' to refer to awkward situations which emerge when one's culturally-rooted expectations are not met by people of a different culture. Thorp (1991) terms these difficulties 'confused encounters' and attributes them to mismatch in expectations between student and staff of different cultures. One example of this 'cultural clash in class' is described by Dumont (1972). He gives a description of the unexpected problems encountered by British teachers of English on a North American Indian reservation in America.

> When classes began we did not expect the intensivity
> of the constrained and cautious behaviour of the students
> nor the long and sometimes embarrassing periods of silence.
> Teachers requested, pleaded with, shouted at.....When they
> did their replies could barely be heard or else the word was
> mouthed...Outside their lesson, the children were noisy,
> bold, daring and insatiably curious.
>
> (Dumont 1972: 47)

As Loveday (1982) states, such cultural conflicts arise because of contrasting cultural evaluation of silence and the teacher's function: for the children, silence was appropriate in the class situations. Similarly, native-English teachers who have taught English to Japanese students

frequently claim that Japanese students seem to have dual personalities or characters and use each of them distinctively in and outside class. Sasaki (1996) refers to Japanese children's dual aspects in their language use.

> Japanese children speak two distinct languages at school:
> the language of 'ura'[back] with friends and with teachers during
> the informal segments that make up the great majority of the
> school day and the language of 'omote'[front] during the formal
> ceremonial moments that punctuate the day and the year.
> (Sasaki 1996: 37)

Having discussed 'Politeness strategies as a face work' in relation to the power relationship between teachers and students, we find that different expectations brought by teachers and students from different cultural backgrounds exist. Those difficulties arise from a gap between teacher-held expectations as to the degree of participation expected from the students. In order to bridge the gap, we need to know about the sources of this mismatch between participants, also, of significance is the degree to which learners comply with teacher expectations. As Holleti (1997) suggests, the learners' expectations also need to be taken into account. Thorp (1991) also warns that teachers are likely to judge students negatively when the students' styles of interaction do not match their own, regardless of whose culture dominates the classroom.

Referring to the Face system proposed by Scollon and Scollon (1995), Monk (1997) states that the power relationship between teachers and learners in the EFL classroom in Japan as (+P, +D) [greater power, greater distance] and emphasizes that this heavily unbalanced relationship needs to be transferred to (-P,-D) in the EFL class. Who is responsible for bridging this 'classroom culture gap'?

> It is the responsibility of both students and teachers.
> Both teachers and students are 'managers of learning.'
> (Sasaki 1996: 18)

1.13 The concept of self in Japanese culture

In this section, I shall specifically examine the concept of 'self' in Japanese culture in relation to the use of politeness and with reference to the validity or universality of politeness theory. Wherever politeness is manifested, it can be said that individuals use 'face-work' as self-protective action. However, the interpretation of the concept of 'self' differs in its quality across cultures.

> As Brown and Levinson (1987) claim, one must be aware that the same underlying principle may produce superficial differences, but one must equally be aware that superficial similarity can result from underlying principles.
>
> (Y.Matsumoto 1988: 404)

In considering 'face' work as superficially similar, the motivation for the use of 'face-work' is facilitated in different ways by using different underlying principles across cultures. The differences of 'face-work' in terms of its quality have been noted by a number of scholars (Ide 1989, Matsumoto 1988, 1989, Morisaki and Gudykunst 1994). Firstly, the Japanese concept of 'self' is different from the Western one. Japanese 'face-work' derives from a common aim, 'social- maintenance.' Matsumoto (1989) argues that because politeness strategies are socially motivated, the speaker must be aware of prevailing socio-cultural patterns of interaction. She goes on to draw a distinction between Japanese concept of self, which emphasises social expectation and dependence, with European ones which stress individual rights and independence.

Thus, in Japanese culture, people are expected to act according to their relative position or rank with regard to other members of the group, and it is that relative position which they strive to maintain when they employ politeness strategies. So, Japanese 'face-work' is an expression of a common expectation. I shall refer to this as 'individuals as social contributor' within inter-

dependent relationships. Matsumoto (1989) provides a clear example and says that in Japanese society, the acknowledgment of interdependence is encouraged. In that way, juniors show respect to seniors by acknowledging their dependence: seniors, in return, feel their responsibilities to take care of juniors. Therefore, it is considered an honour to be asked to take care of others, as it indicates that one is regarded as holding a higher position in the society. On the other hand, the forms of individualism advocated in European corporate structures are considered shameful. Matsumoto remarks:

> The most humiliating punishment a group-serving business-man, 'oyabun' (seniors or bosses) or 'kobun' (juniors) can get is to be singled out and embarrassed as a self-server. Oyabun dare not single out an unfortunate kobun for punishment. The oyabun simply 'stomachs' the incident away or takes the blame himself in public in the form of 'otoshimae' (a 'yakuza-gangster's method of voluntarily accepting the consequences caused by his kobun by means of symbolically cutting off his little finger.) With his lost finger, the oyabun gains credit from the insiders for what he has done... preventing his kobun from losing face and losing the trust of outsiders. (M.Matsumoto 1988: 75)

As this example shows, there is a social expectation that each person has certain responsibilities, and the responsibility of a superior to a subordinate is to treat him or her well. Matsumoto (1989) considers this as a 'relation-acknowledging device' which functions to acknowledge the addressee's higher standing by being a request for favourable action on behalf of the speaker in Japanese. Great significance is placed on social relationships. This is emphasized and it makes the quality or concept of 'face-work' different. Therefore, in Japanese society, acknowledgement and maintenance of the relative position of others governs all social interaction. That is, preservation of individual territory is alien to the Japanese.

As the previous example shows, relations between people in Japanese society characterise

'face-work' and the social context rather than individual autonomy. This also explains how Japanese people interpret the 'territory' to be kept in communication. Matsumoto suggests,

> Desires to defend his or her own territory from the encroachments of others. This notion of individuals and their rights has long been acknowledged in European or American cultures. Such a notion cannot be considered as basic to human relations in Japanese culture and society. What is paramount concern to a Japanese is not his or her own territory, but the position in relation to the others in the group and his or her acceptance by others.
>
> (Y. Matsumoto 1988: 405)

As she points out, 'territory' in face-work from the Japanese point of view cannot be determined without considering the social context in which communication takes place. Therefore, Japanese concepts of face and territory are qualitatively different from those defined as universal by Brown and Levinson (1987). This assertion is also contrary to Leech's view (1983) which regards differences as being quantitative.

In Japanese culture, socially motivated co-operation is a strategy of 'face-work' as an appropriate way of expressing and enhancing the self. Morisaki and Gudykunst (1989) consider that 'co-operation' in this sense does not imply giving up self. Engagement and social harmony with others are instead considered as positive means of promoting co-operation and mutual support. They also maintain that this is not a sign of weakness, rather it reflects tolerance, self-control, flexibility and maturity.

> But this co-operative individual is not losing its individuality or individual identity by participating in group activities. It is merely demonstrating one of the 'faces', it learns to have for different situations. This 'face' is part of the 'tatemae (public behaviour)' which is appropriate behaviour in particular context and an individual will have several such 'faces' for different situations. These different 'faces' are reflected in different speech forms used on different occasions, and none of them negates the existence of a complete self using them all.
>
> (Gudykunst & Morisaki 1994: 77)

It is also interesting to look at the statement by Miyanaga (1991) which refers to Japanese patterns of cooperation such as the use of ritualized or formalized expressions.

> A description of interaction rituals in Japan illustrates this pattern (cooperation) . Body movements, tone of voice, degree of avoidance of eye contact, laughter, smiles, serious expressions and even the degree of body tension are, to a certain extent, carefully controlled to constitute cues. At the same time, a person tries as much as possible to catch the cues given by others. High receptivity is admired. (Miyanaga 1991: 69)

As she points out, the role of paralinguistic features as a significant element of face work is extremely important in interaction. This aspect will be discussed in greater depth in the following chapters.

Finally, it is important to recognize that everyone has both an independent and an interdependent construal of the self, and the way in which these elements interact in particular contexts is crucial to an understanding of the interplay of language, culture and identity. Gudykunst and Morisaki view this as an important consideration in contrasting communicative behaviour of Japanese and American individuals, noting:

> There are individuals in Japan whose independent self-construal is the primary generative mechanism for behaviour, and there are people in the US for whom the inter-dependent self-construal is the predominant generative mechanism for behaviour.
> (Gudykunst & Morisaki 1994:81)

Trafimow et al. (1991) make a significant point suggesting that everyone has ' private self' and 'collective self' cognition. For Gudykunst and Morisaki (1991), however, conceptions of self are divided into three components: 1) human identity 2) social identity 3) personal identity. They see an individual's self-esteem as a combination of both personal and collective self-esteem. They also goes on to suggest:

> If self-esteem is based only on fitting in,
> it can lead to 'mindless conformity,' if it is based only
> on uniqueness, it can lead to social alienation. A balance
> must be achieved between fitting in and being an individual
> in one's own right. (Gudykunst & Morisaki 1994: 69)

However, the balance will be different in individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

On a similar theme, Rosenberger (1992) examined the concept of 'self' in Japanese society and emphasized that in a Japanese context 'self' *(jibun)* is a part of a larger whole that consists of groups and relationships and also that *jibun* is always conceived in relation to that larger whole in a variety of ways. Therefore, Rosenberger (1992) characterizes Japanese 'self' as a multiple, moving and changing entity.

> People continually create themselves and are created in terms
> of the multiple pictures that people weave with others and
> their environment as they move through life.
> (Rosenberger 1992: 3)

She also emphasizes that we need to reconsider not only the 'concept of self' itself but also the way in which our 'selves' are constructed.

> One must continue a quest to further decentre the self...
> How selves are constructed variously in specific situations,
> how these constructions can be fragmented by multiplicity,
> contradiction, and ambiguity, and how these construntions
> shape and are shaped by, relations of power.
> Yet in so doing, we must not lose sight of the importance of
> meanings and meaningful action in social life.
> (Rosenberger 1992: 38)

Having examined the concept of self, it is clear that generally speaking, self-awareness as a universal feature is a product of social participation and cultural representation. It is also important to bear in mind that the self is variable with the socio-cultural dimension.

Chapter 2 Previous studies of the use of silence

2.0 Introduction

Having examined socio-cultural aspects of cross-cultural communication, and having emphasised their dynamic properties, I shall now focus more specifically on previous research into silence in interactive contexts. Inevitably, such a discussion involves a critical investigation of definitions of silence. This in turn will assist in the development of a framework for definition and investigation of silence in the context of the present study.

2.1 What is silence?

> Silence can be a matter of saying nothing and meaning something. (Tannen 1985:97)

The meaning of silence in communication has been explored by many researchers and they describe the nature of silence in various ways. The role of silence in human communication was traditionally defined negatively as a mere absence of sound. Therefore, it was not considered an active component of communication in comparison with speech. In addition, its nature was examined in a rather narrow or limited way, concerned primarily with its function as a boundary marker delimiting the beginning and ending of utterances. For example, Sacks (1974) sees silence as an indication that not everything is going smoothly in turn-taking. Mulholland (1991) also evaluates silence negatively as an abdication from social duty. Such negative evaluations of silence can be attributed to culturally conditioned notions concerning the importance of speech and the awkwardness of silence. It can be viewed invariably as an indication of, at best shyness, and at worst lack of interest, or hostility. Hatch (1992) shares a view of silence by Americans as indicating low-involvement, lack of understanding, lack of interest, unwillingness to continue the topic of conversation, and lack of desire to interact.

In a persuasive critique of this low-involvement hypothesis, Saville-Troike (1985) points to the limitations of such approaches, in that they adopt an exclusively Western perspective and involve an excessive preoccupation with boundary marking functions within turn-taking situations. This approach has tended to neglect a range of functions concerned with speech acts associated with such practices as refusal and assent; or agreement and disagreement. Silence must therefore be considered as part of a complex cultural and situational context, rather than as a unitary invariable.

Once silence is understood to convey a range of possible meanings, its narrow interpretation as the absence of sound, marking pauses in turn-taking, becomes inadequate. Silence, rather, plays an effective and significant role in communication and conveys significant meaning across a range of specific contexts. In addition, we need to bear in mind that different conventions regarding silence as appropriate communicative behaviour exist both within intra-and inter-cultural settings. Following this line, if we pay attention to how to teach the appropriate or effective use of spoken language, it is also necessary to look at silence as a basic social component of communication, and aim to foster an awareness of practices and conventions concerning its use. Therefore, I shall examine how silence is used when, where, by whom, to whom in what manner, and in what particular circumstances. Having indicated the scope for the exploration of the nature of silence, I shall specify the approaches which I am going to use in this study and how I will define 'silence' in relation to the term 'pause.' Although I shall investigate the use of silence by Japanese learners of English using an ethnographic approach , in this section I shall look at the use of silence from three perspectives -conversational, psychological and socio-pragmatic views. As conversational analysis is concerned with the use of silence between turns in interaction, the differences in attitudes and values towards the use of silence in discourse

will be examined according to cultural differences. This aspect shall be more fully discussed in Chapter 4. As far as the psycholinguistic dimension is concerned, which regards silence as 'hesitation phenomena,' I shall explore what types of silences are used as hesitation and examine how silence can be used as a psychological expression. From the ethnographic point of view, I shall explore various different types of silences according to socio-cultural contexts.

The definition of silence and pause

In this study, I am using the term, 'pause' as a necessary break between turns or within utterances to make the interaction smooth or identify the topic direction, but one which does not convey illocutionary force or manifest perlocutionary effects. On the other hand, 'silence' is used as a period of interaction which conveys certain meanings and is used for the sake of effective communication through the absence of spoken utterances and is equivalent to 'communicative silence' as defined by Saville-Troike (1983).

2.2 Conversational analysis - silence as pause

As indicated earlier, most previous studies of silence have been devoted to investigating its function through conversational analysis which regards silence as pauses either between or within turns. Such studies have tended to consider silence as part of communicative act sequences as well as turn-taking. Brown and Yule (1983) proceed to split these pauses into three goups.

1. extended pauses ... extented from between 3.2 to 16 seconds.
2. long pauses ... range from 1.0 to 1.9 seconds
3. short pauses ... range from 0.1 to 1.0 seconds

(Brown and Yule 1983: 162)

Extended and long pauses are then held to indicate unit boundaries between turns while short pauses are considered unit-internal. In addition, pauses as unit boundaries between turns

are pragmatically considered as 'planning markers.' Chafe (1979) also indicates pauses as preceeding utterances, since he regards the pause length as a function of the amount of planning which the speaker is putting into his next utterance. He observes that 'extended pauses' are equivalent to 'major hesitation.' This is one of the functional roles of silence in communication. Crucially this involves the fact that the absence of sound, whether classified as silence or pause is likely to be interpreted differently according to the cultural expectations of discourse participants. Tannen (1985), for example, reports that Jewish New Yorkers share a relatively positive valuation of noise and relatively negative valuation of silence in conversation. Thus, Jewish New Yorkers are much more likely than Americans from most other communities to talk to strangers while waiting in lines or in waiting rooms or when overhearing conversations while passing in the street. On the other hand, in some cultural contexts silence is interpreted positively as a chance for personal exploration or to provide enough space between turns so that the other participants can shape idea. For the latter type of speaker, a relatively fast rate of turn-taking such as that adopted by Jewish New Yorkers could be interpreted as demonstrating a lack of respect or abrasiveness and what was intended as a co-operative overlap is therefore interpreted as interruption. Considering interactional features such as the rate of speech or interruption in relation to the use of silence, Sajaraara and Lehtonen (1997) provide another possible area of misinterpretation based upon expectations arising from different communicative styles.

> The impression of slowness may also be due to pauses that are longer than they should be according to the (subconscious) experience of the listener. Since slow speech rate is also easily confused with slow rate of thinking, serious constraints on efficient interaction may be the result. (Sajaraara and Lehtonen 1997: 267)

The following statement by Tannen (1985) also depicts the reality of interaction between people

who have different speech styles.

> Slower paced-style is negatively valued, but slow and fast have meaning only with reference to expectations. 'Slow' is, in other words, 'slower than I expect,' which regardless of absolute rate, results in the impression of having nothing to say or being unwilling to speak. 'Fast' is 'faster than I expect' which, regardless of absolute rate, results in the impression of crowding.
>
> (Tannen 1985:109)

Tannen also argues for the necessity of recognising the cultural basis of diverse speech style as a basis of sensitive cross-cultural interaction. Developing this relativist approach to cross-cultural communication, Sajaraara and Lehtonen assert:

> There are no ideal values which could be used as norms to label speech as relatively fast or slow. The inter-relationship between objective and subjective temporality is complicated by a multitude of intervening factors such as personality, contextual configurations, and register and style expectations.
>
> (Sajaraara and Lehtonen 1985: 96)

It was found that there are several useful points which characterize the nature of silence as pauses in conversational interaction. The classification of the types of pause in English discourse by Brown and Yule (1983) provides a taxonomy for measurement However, even if a period of silence takes exactly the same form - a 3 second period of silence, for example - it may be interpreted in various ways according to context. Moreover, values and attitudes towards the use of silence differ across cultures and among individuals. Thus, it is important to reflect on how silence is used differently for a given function and in a given context. In the same way, in order to investigate the nature of silence in interaction, we also need to consider how such attitudes are accommodated and reflected in conversational interaction.

<u>Psycholinguistic approach</u>

According to Jaworski (1993), different forms of pauses occur regularly and perform various

cognitive, discoursal and stylistic functions. Pauses, he argues, are used for such purposes as planning utterances, marking boundaries between grammatical clauses and signalling emphasis as well as as formal indicators of particular discourse types and conversational styles. Scollon (1985) adds that pauses may come to have symbolic value in themselves and sees pausing as a factor of considerable significance in communicaiton. Chafe (1985) more narrowly views pauses as hesitation phenomena, which are also held to convey symbolic meaning. He also adds that hesitation phenomena play an important role in interaction in relation to speech production. That is, he sees the ongoing, real-time production of speech as a reflection of the ongoing sequencing of the speaker's thoughts, and also as a creative act, relating two media, thought and language, which are not isomorphic but require adjustments to each other. Therefore, he considers that the fundamental reason for hesitating is that speech production is an act of creation. This more positive evaluation of pauses emerges from the assertion that:

> The speaker's chief goal is to get across what we have in mind. The speaker is interested in the adequate verbalization of his thoughts. Pauses false starts, after thoughts and repetitions do not hinder that goal, but are steps on the way to achieving it.
> (Chafe 1985: 78)

Thus, for Chafe, the focus is upon the way in which people talk about things in each setting and their mental processes.

For, Scollon (1985) pauses are as a coupling mechanism, a rhythmic hitch which holds an interaction together, a form of disfluency. In other words, hesitation can be especially useful in disclosing points at which it is easy to move on and when it is difficult. Scollon (1985) and Siegman (1987) also classify pauses in terms of their variability, drawing a distinction between inturn-pauses and switching (turn exchange) pauses. Siegman (1987) uses the term 'pause' as an equivalent to 'inturn-pauses.' Scollon (1985) considers that 'switching pause' is more

characteristic of individual styles as they appear to be much less susceptible to change by task or under other conditions. On the other hand, 'in-turn' pauses are regarded as those which are more susceptible to situational conditions and may be expected to reflect those conditions more than individual styles.

Chafe (1985) describes two fundamental reasons for hesitating. According to him, sometimes speakers hesitate when they are deciding what to talk about next, and also while they are deciding how to talk about the idea they have chosen. In the latter case, the speaker is likely to have difficulty in deciding, not what to verbalize but how to verbalize something he or she already has in mind. Thus, as expected, in psycholinguistic studies of silence, the focus is upon the mental and cognitive aspects in human interaction. Such studies have proved useful in emphasising the contribution of hesitation to periods of silence. In this context, it is also therefore important to recognise the importance of psychological factors which may affect the degree of hesitation manifested by discourse participants. Degrees of anxiety, uncertainty and difficulties in framing particular concepts are likely to play an important role. Therefore, it is important to take contextual and situational details, such as what a speaker is talking about at each point in a discourse and in what circumstances, into consideration. This is because a speaker deciding how to verbalize a thought will probably do so in different ways for different purposes, depending on whether the speaker is talking to a child, close friends or boss and so on.

Studies of silence from conversational and psycholinguistic points of view reveal that silences or pauses which occur between turn-taking, and within turns can be interpreted in different ways. The classification of types of pause has shown their possible functions in interaction. However, it is also crucial to note that the function, meaning and significance of

silence can differ according to a number of factors. In the next section, the use of silence in specific contexts will be considered with a view to reaching a more sophisticated understanding of these variables.

2.3 Silence and Communication

Saville-Troike (1985) strongly emphasizes the importance of the situational context in interpreting the meaning of silence and mentions that the meanings carried by pauses or silence are generally affective, connotative, symbolic and conventional. Houck and Gas (1997) also assume that silence conveys socially constructed meanings:

> We also assume that different cultures use silence for different purposes (e.g., time of thought, lack of understanding) In some cultures, silence is a normal and expected part of an interaction; in others, it is awkward and uncomfortable.
>
> (Houck and Gas 1997: 285)

That is, it is important to understand the fact that the role and the interpretations of silence exist functionally according to socio-cultural conventions. Basso (1970) made a similar point as long ago as 1970.

> Although the form of silence is always the same, the function of a specific act of silence - that is, its interpretation by and effect upon other people will vary according to the social context in which it occurs. (Basso 1970: 132)

Basso also appreciated the importance of recognising these variations in pedagogical situations in order to raise awareness of the cultural significance of silence as a means to facilitate more sensitive approaches to cross-cultural communication.

In order to achieve this, it is also important to consider under which circumstances the differences are likely to be manifested. Sifianou (1997) claims that the extent to which people feel socially obliged to produce or avoid silences varies culturally, situationally and individually.

She also mentions that the participants' decision to initiate or contribute to an interaction is determined by three elements as follows;

> 1) Cultural norms
> i.e., which of the two, in general, the particular society values more; taciturnity or volubility
> 2) Situational norms
> i.e., what the particular context requires
> 3) Individual Traits
> i.e., some people are more talkative than others by nature or may feel in a more loquacious or taciturn mood at a given time. (Sifianou 1997: 63)

Taking these aspects into accounts, in this section, I shall present functionally different types of silence in specific socio-cultural contexts, from an ethnographic point of view.

I shall also try to characterize some apects of silence in terms of form, function and meaning.

Silence as dynamics

One of the key aspects of silence is the very dynamic nature both in its form and functions. In terms of its form, as Saville-Troike (1985) notes, the length of silence can vary from the unnoticed cessation of sound in the production of consonants to the longer pauses perceived in interaction. Brown and Yule's (1983) system was essentially devised as a strategy for coping with such length variation. Saville-Troike (1985) in developing strategies for analysing pause length classifies in terms of its CODE and CHANNEL, provided a much broader view of the existence of silence in our daily communication. She claims that there are two different types of silence, which are verbal and non-verbal silence. The diagram shown below gives several examples of each type of silence.

		CHANNEL	
		Vocal	Non-vocal
CODE	Verbal	Spoken Language	Writing Sign language
	Non-verbal	Paralinguistic Prosodic Features	Kinesics Proxemics Eye behaviour

(Saville-Troike 1985: 145)

Thus, while 'writing' may not be accompanied by any vocalization, it shares all other features of verbal communication with speech. Therefore, according to student-teacher's taxonomy it is verbal but nonvocal. However, writing also has a nonverbal dimension which is signalled by spacing or punctuation. Therefore, Saville-Troike also considers writing to display characteristics of silence, suggesting the use of silent marker '.....' in Japanese literature as one means of creating this effect. Sign language, while sharing with writing a verbal dimension, also allows the possibility of non-verbal interaction, including the communicative use of 'silence,' perhaps often achieved by closing the eyes or averting eye gaze. However, if we look at the differences in the length of silence in relation to its contextual and situational use, we can notice that silence has many different forms or faces. This fact depicts the dynamic nature of silence.

2.4 Silence and Speech - Silence as complexity and fuzziness

How do we communicate with each other?
Do we talk only when we are speaking?
(Jaworski 1993: 28)

During the literature review of the studies of silence in conversation analysis, I argued that the role of silence has tended to be understood negatively as a mere absence of sounds especially in the Western context in which a high value is placed on speech in interaction. In psycholinguistic studies of silence, its role has been reappraised positively. However, the focus

has largely been upon understanding participants' cognitive and mental process of the production of speech. That is, the discussion is devoted to how the symbolic meaning of silence in interaction can be interpreted in terms of fluency or disfluency, or, the relative success of achieving the aim of expressing ideas fully rather than investigating the actual meaning conveyed or created by the use of silence itself. This would result in the neglect of an important function of silence in communication.

2.5 Various functions of silence - Positive and Negative aspects of silence

Through the discussion of the nature of silence from the several different perspectives, its dynamic and fuzzy aspects become evident. In order to understand the nature of silence more deeply, in this section, I shall look at different functions of silence in various socio-cultural contexts.

Firstly, the function of silence in human interaction is characterised by its duality. That is, it may be perceived either positively as an expression of intimacy and rapport, or negatively as an obstacle. It could also be interpreted as proper respect to seniors or someone who is of higher status, the silence of listening to others with full concentration, the silence for contemplation. Tannen (1993: 176) also suggests that silence itself is not necessarily a sign of powerlessness, just as volubility in itself is not a sign of domination. It is the interaction of the two which attributes meaning to each form of behaviour (1993:176), as the following interaction, cited in Jawaroski (1993) illustrates; The scene is a small bathroom and the time is early morning before going to work. The husband is shaving and the wife enters to dry her hair.

Wife: Am I disturbing you?
Husband: Silence
Wife: Silence (Walks out)

(Jaworski 1993: 76)

In this example, the wife interpreted her husband's silence as a yes. He interpreted her silence as 'Okay. I will come back when you have done.' Their exchange was economical, efficient and to the point (Jaworski 1993). Another example is that silence can be seen as positive if it is assumed to represent the omission of something negative like 'If you cannot say something nice, do not say anything.' This example is one of the characteristic aspects of the silence used by the Japanese like 'It is better to say nothing if you do not have concrete idea.' There is an example which is related to this positive use of silence as the omission of something negative. This is the experience in my teaching at a company. There was a group of learners who were business men. One day a junior was late to come into the class. As soon as he came in, a senior said to him, 'If you are late, do not come into the class.' The senior seemed to say this to warn the junior not to be late but also his words included the meaning that if you are late and come to class in the middle of the lesson, it is disturbing others so it is better not to appear if you disturb others. In this case, the junior had been late a few times already. Therefore, the effect of senior's words was quite severe. However, there are instances when people prefer to say nothing rather than having to say something uncomfortable.

As far as a negative side is concerned, if the lack of utterances results in misinterpretation or ineffectiveness between participants, silence fails and is considered negatively. As an example of positive silence, the silence of concentration in listening to others could be mentioned. However, even the act of listening is the same, if the speaker expects the listener to react in some way with utterances such as back channelling, asking questions, asking for clarification or offering an opinion, the silence could be interpreted as highly threatening. In this case, whatever the listener's intention is, the communication breaks down. Thus, silence can work as both negative and positive politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1986). According to them,

silence has a positive value as a way of serving negative politeness (not imposing on others) and silence can also have a negative value when it is seen as the failure of positive politeness (the need to be involved with others). As several examples show here, silence can be seen both positively and negatively. Needless to say, its effectiveness for successful communication depends on the context in which it is used. However, it can be said that silence has dual aspects in terms of its effectiveness and the existence of silence surely affects the communication in both good and bad ways.

Silence as complexity

Sanders (1985) states that one of the functions of silence is as 'a strategy of emotional management.' He specifically mentions the use of silence in the management of strong but problematic emotions. In other words, silence may be a manifestation of conflicting or problematic emotions. Drawing on research in the small Italian town of Valbella, Sanders discovered that while children were encouraged by their parents to act out unambiguous emotions verbally, they were discouraged from expressing ambiguous emotions in the same way. Harper and Wiens (1978) also state that deep emotions are often 'expressed' most significantly by an absence of expression or silence though they have not specified what sorts of emotions are included.

Moreover, Tannen (1990) used a literary dialogue for analysis of interaction. She states that the dialogue in the literary work is not equivalent to actual spontaneous interaction. However, it depicts several characteristic features of human interaction. Through an analysis of the play, 'Betrayal and a short story: Great Wits by Pinter,' she found that silence can be associated with conflict or negative emotion in 'high involvement' situations and that silence is used as a way of masking strong unstated feelings. That is, the function of silence is to indicate

continuous intense thought or the existence of unspoken tension. In addition, according to Tannen (1990), in this play the use of silence represents climaxes of emotion in interaction. Thus:

> In the context of potentially explosive conflict in Betrayal, pauses and silence prevent the conflict from exploding and destroying the possibility of continuing the relationship.
> (Tannen 1990: 263)

As Tannen (1990) and Sanders (1985) point out, silence can therefore be used as a tool of conflict management. In this context, it is also useful to investigate the use of silence in relation to gesture. This is because in performance, it is the job of the actors to portray emotions through facial expression or body movements. Thus, the meaning of silence is contextualised through the use of gestures. This aspect will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Culturally different uses of silence

> The production of silence, like the production of speech, can realise an ideological struggle. It follows that to arrive at an understanding of how ideology expresses itself will involve us in systematic research of who remains silent, about what and in what situations.
> (Sajavaara and Lehtonen 1997: 270)

In the previous section, I looked at a range of functions of silence in various situational contexts. In this section, I shall look at culturally different uses of silence within the same context. In other words, with a view to establishing the degree of variation of function according to socio-cultural factors. There are three points which I shall explore; the use of silence in politics; socio-culturally different uses of silence in daily life; and the formulaic use of silence.

Firstly, in politics, silence is recognized as a rhetorical tool employed to achieve particular goals.

The use of silence in the political speech would seem to be differently interpreted according to culturally determined factors, as the following example from Jaworski illustrates.

> When Lech Walesea and Tadeusz Mazowiecki were running for President of Poland, a press article compared the success and effectiveness of their respective campaigns. Walesa's style - marked by fast tempo, varied intonation, and absence of pause was evaluated more positively (as more effective) than Mazowiecki's style - described as monotonous and marked by long silences. In political discourse in Poland, fast speech, loudness and constant shifting between different speech styles are more highly valued than speaking slowly, quietly and monotonously.
>
> (Jaworski 1993: 7)

As this example shows, in Poland, the use of silence in political discourse does not seem to be positively encouraged. On the other hand, in Japanese political discourse, a diametrically opposite rhetorical style is valued as a necessary quality of leadership. Lebra (1987), for example, refers to the example highly valued qualities associated with political leadership in Japan.

> Even in the political area, oratory is not a necessary quality for leadership and some Prime Ministers in the past have been known for their slow, clumsy speech style as exemplified by Mr. Ohira. Such leaders may be joked about but not discredited due to their poor speech. Silence could have a political appeal as in the case of Noboru Takeshita, the recently nominated successor to Prime Minister Nakasone, who is known as 'a man of silence and patience.' (Lebra 1987: 346)

Thus, the function of silence, and its evaluation is dependent upon cultural context. In order to understand its effectiveness or ineffectiveness, it is necessary to consider whether it is regarded positively or negatively in a given situation.

Another example of the use of silence which is culturally variable is the existence of the formulaic silence. According to Jaworski (1993), formulaic silences can be understood to be

customary acts of saying nothing in reaction to stimuli. He gives the following illustrations:

> When someone sneezes, it is almost a categorical rule in Polish to say 'Na zdrowie (To your health). In English, 'Bless you' is sometimes said in such a situation, but some people say nothing and few people mind if they sneeze and nothing is said. Here silence is an accepted, conventional, but not formulaic response to someone's physiological bodily reaction.
>
> (Jaworski 1993: 59)

On the contrary in the Japanese context, there is not any equivalent formulaic expression such as 'Bless you.'' in English. Most people say nothing though occasionally there might be people who ask the person who sneezes, 'Are you Okay?' or 'Do you have a cold?' as a spontaneous enquiry into the sneezer's health. On the other hand, at meal times, most Japanese say 'Itadakimasu (Literally, I am going to have a meal gratefully with thanks.)' as a declaration of the start of the act of eating similar to a performative utterance. In the Japanese context, if children start to eat without saying this phrase, they will be criticized as their behaviour will be considered disrespectful. This phrase is accompanied by the gesture of joining the hands. However, in English discourse, there is no equivalent expression though some religious groups such as Christians do pray before the meal. From these examples, Jaworski (1993) concludes that the use of formulaic silence is part of a system of sociolinguistic rules dependent upon socio-cultural context. Thus, the use, distribution and interpretation of formulaic silences, just like verbal routines, are regulated by a set of sociolinguistic rules that involve external situational factors such as culturally different uses of silence in various contexts.

Finally, I shall look at some cultural contexts in which people in particular cultures highly value the use of silence. They are Apache, Igbo, Finnish, Athabaskan and the Japanese culture. First, Basso (1970) analysed the use of silence in Western Apache culture and reported that the absence of verbal communication was associated with social situations. For example,

Apache people generally keep silent during the initial stage of courtship. A youth explained why they keep silent in that context. At the initial stage, as they do not know each other, verbal communication is not considered appropriate. Apache people's way of knowing each other in courtship therefore begins with a silent period. This tendency differs from courtship in Western culture where people get to know each other by talking from the beginning. A Westerner wants to get to know the other by talking, and an Apache feels it is inappropriate to talk until they know each other. From this example, culturally different expectations can be recognized with respect to when it is appropriate to speak and how it is appropriate to communicate. Next, according to Nwoye (1985), the Igbo are typically very extroverted in their personal interactions. In Igbo culture, silence is a highly marked form of behaviour. It is not regarded merely as the absence of speech, but in almost all instances, silence is interpreted as having significant communicative consequences. Having examined the use of silence in several social contexts in Igbo culture, Nwoye (1985) emphasises its association with the ritual use of silence. Customarily, about four days after a death, it is deemed appropriate to visit the house. The use of silence during the visiting is described as follows:

> Sympathizers walk in, go straight to the bereaved stand before them for a short time, then find a seat somewhere among some other members and join them a while in mutual silence. They have shown by their physical presence that they sympathize with the bereaved and share in the loss of their beloved.
>
> (Nwoye 1985: 186)

Nwoye also suggests that silence in this context, apart from marking the solemnity of the situation, further shows that the sympathizer, who is also the carrier of a sacrifice, is engaged in a serious spiritual task and should not be disturbed by such mundane things as the exchange of greetings. It is also reported that in Igbo society, silence can be used as a sanction against the deviations of members of a village community. For example, the entire village is forbidden

to talk to certain offenders and members of their immediate families. These examples, from two different communities provide some insight into the use of silence in specific contexts. From the example of the use of silence in the Igbo culture on the occasion of the death of someone, it can be understood that silence is motivated by spiritual reasons. However, specific socio-cultural background knowledge is necessary in order to contextualise diverse uses of silence across cultures. This was further illustrated in Sajavaara's (1997) comparative study of the social implications of silence in Finnish and American social interaction. In Finnish society, social interaction is characterised by the listener's silence, while that between American subjects included questions and other strategies thought to be means of avoiding silences. One function of talk among Americans is therefore thought to be the avoidance of silence. As well as noting diverging attitudes and practices surrounding silence, sociolinguists and anthropologists have also emphasized that silence may be valued for different reasons. Sajaraara and Lehtonen (1997) for example, contrast the function of silence in Nordic and Asian contexts as follows:

> Nordic silence means retirement to solitude and non-communication, which makes it different from the kind of silence that is typical of Japan, Korea and China. In these Asian high-context cultures, non-talkativeness can mostly be described as active silence, which is expected to create the right kind of atmosphere and make the evaluation of the other party possible.
>
> (Sajavaara and Lehtonen 1997:271)

Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the use of silence in each specific cultural context so that people from different socio-cultural backgrounds can understand its use, function and meaning. In addition, even within one culture, silence may function differently between different types of situations and also according to the participants' needs. So, in order to understand specific use of silence, the specification of setting, participants' relationship and socio-cultural background need to be investigated.

Japanese silence

> What cultural values and beliefs underlie Japanese communication?
> What, in other words, does silence symbolize for the Japanese?
> (Lebra 1987: 343)

Having looked at various aspects of silence in different socio-cultural contexts, silence could be characterized by its dynamics, complexity and fuzziness in relation to the use of speech, duality in terms of effectiveness and complexity in its reflection of culturally diverse values.

In this section, I shall look at the characteristics of silence in Japanese culture in relation to the Japanese cultural practices. Dale (1986) and Lebra (1987) identify a number of functions of silence in the Japanese context. For Lebra (1987), four dimensions of silence are culturally salient.

1. Silence as truthfulness
2. Silence as social discretion
3. Embarrassment
4. Defiance

According to Lebra (1987), it can be said that silence in Japanese culture reflects truth and also paradoxically can be used as a technique for concealment. As far as truthfulness is concerned, Lebra (1987) explains how silence reflects truths in the following terms:

> The Japanese view the person as sharply split into inner and outer parts and believe that truth lies only in the inner realm as symbolically localized in the heart or belly. Components of the outer self, such as face, mouth, spoken words are, in contrast, associated with disguise, distortion, deception..... in short, cognitive and moral falsity. Truthfulness, sincerity, straight-forwardness or reliability are allied to reticle, the inner-outer duality of a speaker. (Lebra 1987: 345)

La Forge (1983) regards such concepts as a reflection of 'the aesthetics of silence' and regards the silence as truthfulness model as making a virtue out of reticence and open expression of one's inner thoughts. According to Lebra, this attitude can be traced to the Zen Buddhist idea that man is capable of arriving at the highest level of contemplative being only when he makes no attempt

at verbalization and recounces oral expression as the height of superficiality.

Yamada (1998) also points out the indispensable relationship between Japanese silence and the Confucianism.

> The confucial code of conduct, designed to guide group members through compatible relationships and smooth interaction, also discouraged straightforward speech because saying whatever you feel was seen as not always socially appropriate or graceful. (Yamada 1997: 16)

She also explains this as follows;

> From this convergence of religious ideas grew a view that explicit talk with definite meanings was often undesirable, and since talk always presents the opportunity to be overly explicit - that is, tactless and blunt - the Japanese began to treat talk as a communicative medium that warrants caution and suspicion. (Yamada 1997: 16)

Such attitudes would seem to more closely reflect the functions associated by Lebra (1987) with social discretion. This views silence as necessary or desirable in order to gain social acceptance or to avoid social penalty. Therefore, silence here involves restraint from revealing the inner truth, whether cognitive, emotional or moral, in consideration of sociability whatever social value needs to be sustained in interaction. That is, in a Japanese context, silence occurs because of taboos on expression of strong emotions. The Japanese, for example, tend to suppress expressions of pleasure, pain or anger and sometimes even the articulation of direct opinion which can be interpreted as a reflection of immaturity or strong and above all an emotional attempt to challenge group harmony. This is largely because Japanese people believe that harmony or unity is more important than individualism. Having looked at the two different uses of silence in Japanese culture, as Lebra points out, in terms of its function or meaning, the second dimension, social discretion is frequently used to conceal something rather than reflect truth. In other words, contrary to the first dimension where silence is truthful, it is the

spoken word that is truthful though it may invite social disapproval, hostility or shame.

In the third and fourth aspect of silence identified by Lebra (1987), silence can be used to avoid possibly harmful speech, for example by avoiding saying 'no' or 'I do not agree with you.' Therefore, silence itself is sometimes a reply as a refusal to answer a question or is used to express hostility, defiance or embarrassment. La Forge (1986) sees this use of silence by the Japanese because of the fear of alienation within the community.

> Japanese attitudes towards languages are connected with problems of alienation and identification with one's peer group. They look for complete consensus of feeling before taking a course of action. It is difficult for them to act with one segment of the group disagreeing. Expressing one's own inner thoughts is restrained not only to avoid hurt feelings but also from the strong fear that by opening one's heart with full candour, one might become isolated from the group to which one belongs.
>
> (La Forge 1983: 78)

In addition to the use of silence mentioned above, I shall look at two other important dimensions of silence among the Japanese. One is that silence works as effective wordless communication *Haragei* (literally *hara* means belly and *gei* is art) among the Japanese. In Western culture, people exchange their opinions verbally. However, Japanese people tend to share their feelings without saying anything and try to understand others' intentions as a polite phenomenon.

Dale (1983) states that the Japanese have what he calls 'anticipated perception' which enables them, apparently, to tune into other people's wave-length.' He considers that this capacity derives from being a 'unitary race' and also sees *Haragei* as the sort of behaviour we refer to when speaking of reading between lines. The other use of silence among the Japanese is that it represents a useful means of sociolinguistic training in society. One reason relates to the use of silence as social discretion noted by Lebra (1987). In general, there are many occasions when the Japanese are not supposed to express their feelings directly and strongly

for the sake of harmony within the group. Therefore, silence is expected. This sociolinguistic assimilation has been developing since childhood and the importance of silence is socio-culturally constructed. Thus, the social meaning of silence in the Japanese context has its own features which differ from the Western valuation of silences. Barnlund (1975) considers this socially constructed use of silence within a view of Japanese communication.

1. Premeditation - silence
2. Rehearsal - observe what others are thinking
3. Performance - own idea (Barnlund 1975:52)

He points out that the two steps before performance which are normally expected in communication in Japanese also show how the Japanese value silence. As a conclusion, I have arrived at the categorization of silence in the Japanese context as follows:

1. Silence as truthfulness - inner true expression
2. Silence as social discretion - silence because of taboos on expression of strong emotions for the sake of social harmony
3. Silence as embarrassment - fear of alienation
4. Silence as defiance - as a reply: refusal
5. Silence as effective wordless communication - 'haragei' (mutual intuitive understanding)
6. Silence as sociolinguistic training in society

Having categorized silences in Japanese contexts, it emerges that silences have different faces or functions. There are silences which contradict each other such as silence as truthfulness and social discretion and there are also silences which are internally and deeply related to each other and underlie social expectation. That is, it has been shown that silence can be symbolic of logically opposite meanings. This complexity generates confusion and misunderstanding not only for the cultural outsider, but also for the native as well, as silence may result from a mixture of contradictory and ambiguous feelings. Dale (1987) points out that it is important to avoid falling back on stereotypes:

> Japanese taciturnity does not imply that they lack private opinions but rather that: it only means that people fear that self assertion may possibly open up cracks in a friendly relationship with those people who form the very basis of one's own subsistence. (Dale 1987: 109)

Mizutani (1981) also points out that it is dangerous to categorically label the Japanese as talkative or taciturn, since the degree to which a given person talks is determined by external conditions. Therefore, we must consider the contexts in which groups or individuals can be considered silent. Thus, in this research, the use of silence by the Japanese will be investigated according to situational contexts, focusing upon the use of silence in the EFL context. In order to investigate its use in the Japanese context, it is also necessary, however, to understand current gradual changes of attitude among the Japanese. Mizutani (1981) sees the change as follows:

> There has been a sizable increase in the number of talkative individuals recently. Especially noticeable is the decrease of very reserved children and women, who were formerly seen and not heard in Japanese life. (Mizutani 1981: 169)

Nevertheless, Mizutani still considers economy of speech as a marker of maturity in Japanese society. Lebra (1983) also raises the question of how their communicative behaviour changes when the sense of self within a group is weakened. 'Will the Japanese become more talkative, less silent, to assert themselves? As far as her impression goes, overt silence will continue or even intensify but its meaning change. But, if so, how?

2.6 Silence and Language learning

Having discussed how silences are valued differently in different cultures, I shall now examine how silences or pauses occur in the classroom and how far the existence of silence affects students in second language learning. The relationship between second language learning and culture is a crucial issue. This is because learners' attitudes towards theirs and the target culture are a crucial part of foreign or second language learning. In the process of

learning, they need to know the differences or similarities between their native and the target culture, but this does not imply that they have to adopt every aspect of the target culture by abandoning their own culture. In fact, second language learning can help facilitate awareness of the home culture as a part of identity in contrast with the different values reflected in the target culture. The use of silence is partly or largely a cultural phenomenon and needs to be understood as such. Therefore, in this section, the role of silence in second language learning will be considered in a Japanese context in comparison with the use of silence in other socio-cultural domains.

Language learning performance and silence

As Day (1981) points out, most teachers are familiar with children who say little or nothing in the EFL context. Unfortunately, it can happen that efforts to elicit verbal responses are often met with monosyllabic replies at best such as 'Yes,' or 'I do not know,' or complete silence. In order to break this invisible but hard wall, it is extremely important to investigate the reason for such silences. Before exploring the use of silence in individual socio-cultural learning circumstances, I shall examine how silences are used in the class both by teachers and learners. Gilmore (1985), in his study of linguistic, paralinguistic and social behaviour in a variety of EFL contexts, draws a distinction between pauses for thought and silence used for strategic or communicative purposes. In observing teachers, Gilmore suggested that silence was deployed with a view to gaining attention or controlling the pace of the lesson.

That is, teachers' silences seem to facilitate the pacing of classroom interactional rhythms. Thus, the silence used by teachers here seems to convey a message about students' expected behaviour in the class to make as an effective control device between a teacher and the whole class. Secondly, as far as students' use of silence is concerned, he states that silence

is used both to participate in class activities and also as a way of displaying emotion. This is because teachers' expected appropriate behaviour of students, much of the students' co-operative silence in the role of a listener needs to be involved in the focused activity attentively. In addition, silence has a role as an effective face saving device. According to his finding, it is specifically pointed out that sulking was primarily performed as an angry key.

An important aspect of Gilmore's approach involved the consideration of how gesture and facial expression interacted with silence to indicate confusion or defiance. As he points out, the way in which silence is used will lead to different interpretations. For example, it will be different when students look at the teacher directly with puzzled faces and when the silence is accompanied by a tight jaw and looking away from the teacher. As a suggestion for further investigation, he points out that stylized sulking seemed to be seen as a cultural variation of expression and communication. It is also a necessity to have a growing sensitivity to awareness of cultural variation in communication and accept such cultural diversity.

> Not only do cross-cultural examples detail the range of styles
> for expressing emotions but considerable ethnic diversity
> can be observed in our own society. (Gilmore 1985: 158)

Similar behaviours can be interpreted in very different ways. Including those uses of silence above, such as sulking silence, silence as appropriate student behaviour or as a face saving device.

I shall now investigate how silence is culturally salient and in what way it is displayed in different socio-cultural learning contexts. I shall compare the different uses of silence in several different learning circumstances, using such examples as research into learners from Hawaii who are Samoan-speaking ESL children in the first grade in Honolulu, American Indian children from three different communities such as Navajo or Creole and Japanese children in Japan

(learners who are in mono-lingual setting.) I shall examine the similarities and differences in using silence in EFL among different learning contexts described above from different perspectives such as overall student attitudes towards the use of silence in the class, frequently adopted methods by teachers and class size, the power-relationship between a teacher and learners. For the last point, it will be explored how far teachers' authority is influential in class. Finally, learners' preferred learning style is also investigated.

Firstly, in terms of students' attitudes in each learning circumstance, there is a common feature which is that learners show a great deal of reluctance to talk in class and participate little in verbal interaction. In the case of students in Hawaii, the teacher categorised students who were reluctant to speak, quiet children and non-verbal ones (Day 1981).

According to their classification, a quiet child might respond to questions but would seldom volunteer any information. A non-verbal child, on the other hand, would not reply to any type of question. These students were characterized by their shyness, fear and unwillingness with lowered eyes and heads accompanying their silence. As far as the method which is frequently or mostly adopted in each learning circumstance is concerned, each learning circumstance does not specify frequently adopted teaching methods. In the case of Navajo (John 1971) and Creole children (Dumont 1972), imitation and repetition as exemplified by the pattern drills aimed at the accurate reproduction of words were considered key factors in the acquisition of English. Such mechanical approaches have also been identified with Japanese pedagogical practice. However, the main difference between Indian and Japanese contexts is the reason why the similar and rather mechanical way of teaching is adopted.

In the Navajo American Indian context, students are expected to become well-adjusted members

of a mainstream society. For this reason, the function of language in the Navajo culture is limited, while listening to each other's words with respect and patience is a crucial part of Indian culture. In addition, the political considerations of teaching English to Indians (some of the treaties have included what sort of instruction is to be adopted in their provisions. In the Creole context, it is reported that:

> The ways in which teaching-learning are transacted in the school are of such a nature that they keep the Cherokee student from learning English blocking from meeting the most basic requirements necessary for using education as a tool in achieving economic stability.
> (Dumont 1972: 368)

Thus, in the two Indian communities described above, the types of method are determined by the authorities for social and political reasons. On the other hand, in the Japanese context, there has not been any political reason for requiring the adoption of certain methods of teaching English. Even so, both in the EFL context and beyond, mechanical pedagogical approaches emphasizing the memorisation of a multitude of facts has dominated. As a result, assessment and evaluation have tended to focus on checking how much knowledge students can correctly memorize. This situation naturally provides an incentive for students to memorize knowledge transmitted by teachers which is then required to pass the entrance examinations of good universities. Needless to say, teaching methods have been decisively influenced by these requirements. In addition, large class sizes, -typically there are 35-40 students in a class at secondary schools - have also limited the opportunities for students to express themselves in various ways. This problem has also been noted in the Hawaiian context, where class sizes have been reduced by up to five in an attempt to encourage greater participation on the part of the students. Day (1981) reported that this enabled learners to participate in the class more easily.

However, in such circumstances, the influence of assumptions regarding effective pedagogical practice, and the relationship between these and students' own learning cultures cannot be ignored. As Philips (1971) observed, the diverging expectations created by such cultural differences can be a source of serious misunderstanding. In her well known study of Native American children and European American teachers, Philips highlighted differing expectations regarding the role of speech in the classroom situation. For the children involved, the classroom conventions they encountered were unfamiliar and alien to their own learning practices in a number of ways. While the familiar rituals of the Western classroom involved the central presence of a teacher in a hierachical setting in which learning consisted of verbal instruction and comprehension checking, Philips found that learning paradigms associated with Cherokee culture instead emphasised observation, physical participation, and self evaluation. One result, Philips notes, is that:

> The absence of appropriate social conditions for communicative performances affects the most common and everyday speech acts that occur in the classroom.
> (Philips 1972: 207)

As a result, the Warm Spring children's classroom behaviour is directly influenced by social conditions of communication in their own community. John's (1972) study of Navajo children drew similar conclusions, observing that the tendency to consider learning as predominantly a process of silent visual exploration rendered classroom contexts stressing verbal performance alien to their community's experience. In contrast, Dumont (1972) observed that Sioux children had developed an amazingly complex system of communication and control within the classroom. One aspect of this was non-verbal- a mouthed word, a shift in the body, a gesture, or a glance. Another was verbal, in both English and Sioux, deftly used so that noise was kept just below the level at which point they would warrant punishment, and

were of such a nature that no individual could be singled out for censure. When the children did what the teacher asked, they showed neither interest nor excitement. In each of these cases, the cultural assumptions of teachers regarding effective pedagogical practice was seen to exert a detrimental effect on the learning situation, exacerbated by such unequal power relations which obtains between students and teachers. In the case of the Sioux children, Dumont reported that they were very active verbally outside the class. For Dumont it seemed that students consiously decided to suppress their speech, a phenomena he described as presenting a 'mask of silence'. As with the Warm Springs children, who, though silent in teacher directed activity, were relatively vocal when asked to work in small groups, student behaviour seemed attributable to uncertainty regarding the verbal roles of teacher and student in whole class activities. In Creole culture, the Cherokee value individual autonomy to such a degree that to stare is considered rude. They are also inducted into the subtlety and nuance of words, tones and moods. In this context, for Dumont (1972), a teacher, Mr. Miller's multitude of words, tones and moods represents not only conflicting emotions and attitudes but also carelessness and incompetency. It is even more perplexing and incomprehensible to students because of Mr. Miller's anger, and also he preaches and talks too much. This situation certainly creates an unbalanced, unequal power-relationship between the teacher and the students.

> Silence tells more than any number of words can. It is threatening, frustrating, condemning, rage-filled and it expresses understanding compliance, acquiescence and defeat. The slightest motions, a change in posture or a facial expression are cause for immediate attention for they mean a shift in the meaning of silence. Every different form that it takes is also a different kind of tension, which is never absent but only varies in intensity depending upon what Mr. Miller does.
>
> (Dumont 1972: 355)

Japanese students' use of silence

A number of similar problems present themselves in the Japanese context. When once asked what the most difficult aspect of teaching English in Japan was, I replied, 'creating an active atmosphere and situation in classrooms.' There are two key reasons for this difficulty prevailing educational principles in Japan and the status of the teacher.

Traditionally, teachers have enjoyed a high status socially, so there is a great social distance between teachers and students. In addition, one of the most important educational principles in school is the directive to listen to others without interruption. Only after people finish listening, are reactions and answers encouraged. This practice is derived from the Japanese turn-taking system which emphasizes the importance of careful listening without interruption. This principle is encouraged in all social situations and therefore also in English classes. It is natural for students to behave in the same way as in other subjects because of the socio-cultural behaviour expected amongst Japanese people. The second point which characterizes a Japanese students' behaviour in the classroom emerges from the observation of a British colleague that Japanese students appear to have a dual personality - one for the class and another for outside. This means that they sometimes disguise their true feelings so as to conform to Japanese educational expectations. Thus, social and educational differences between their own culture and the target culture prevent Japanese learners in second language classrooms from communicating successfully in a similar way to the classroom behaviour of the Warm Spring children. This cultural specific manifestation of silence in class and different turn-taking systems across cultures will be more fully explored in the following Chapters.

Chapter 3 Japanese cultural values

3.0 Key factors influencing the use of silence in communication

> No matter what I try, students just don't
> speak and they clam up like a shell. (Torikai 1996)

The first impression of Japanese learner of English by EFL teachers has been frequently expressed in similar terms to the statement above. Most teachers have encountered uncomfortable silences in interaction with students and naturally sought an explanation. However, such explanations are rarely simple, and often rely on stereotypical characterisations of passivity or lack of co-operation. In reality, not only the existence of silence itself in the EFL context but also its length have been regarded as unresolved problems. While this should be conceded, it may however, be possible to identify some common factors leading to the prevalence of what are often considered to be agonizingly prolonged silences. In previous chapters, I have pointed out that possible reasons for students remaining silent cannot always be related back to learners' lack of linguistic knowledge, but arise in large part from socio-cultural differences between the target culture and the learner's own. In order to investigate the use of silence by Japanese learners of English, considerable understanding of the Japanese socio-cultural background is essential. There are two crucial reasons for this. First, as Brown & Levinson (1978) and Maynard (1997) claim, although a common core of conversational rules probably exists across cultures, not all cultures emphasize or value the same rules to the same degree. Thomas (1983) also suggests that cross-culturally two things may occur which appear to involve a fundamental conflict of values, but in fact stem from socio-pragmatic mismatches:

> 1. In different cultures, different pragmatic 'ground rules' may be invoked.
> 2. Relative values such as 'politeness', 'perspicuousness,' may be ranked in a different order by different cultures. (Thomas 1983: 106)

This view is supported by Noguchi (1987), who proposes 'a hierarchy of conversational rules.' That is, in a given socio-cultural context, some rules are more highly valued than others and therefore the priority of using certain rules in interaction naturally differs across cultures. He adds:

> All cultures have some point of 'equilibrium,' so to speak, at which the various forces exerted by the rules reach some delicate balance and conversation proceeds in the smoothest manner. This point of equilibrium is not, however, the same for all cultures (nor even for all people within a particular culture.) (Noguchi 1987: 18)

In the Japanese context, for example, the rule to protect face, not only one's own but also that of the addressee, is more highly valued than the rule to sustain talk in conversation, while in Western contexts, the maintenance of verbal interaction is more highly valued (Noguchi 1987, De Mente1993, White 1987). If such is the case, with two different sets of cultural assumptions and expectations, interaction between participants from different socio-cultural backgrounds may lead to a cross-cultural clash of rules, and communication breakdowns may occur.

Another significant reason for deepening our understanding of Japanese cultural norms is that it is necessary for both teachers and learners to be aware of the possible reasons why Japanese students tend to value protecting face over attempting to communicate actively:

> In the case of the Japanese speaker, the critical point will come when he or she has to choose between protecting face (keeping one's and other party's social-self from harm) or protecting conversation (maintaining talk in conversation)..... Conversation are not merely formal or informal with no gradations in between. Rather what occurs is a constant shifting between the two poles of formality and informality depending on such factors as what is being talked about, who is saying it to whom, and when and why it is said. During such conflicts, it is only natural that the more culturally valued rule will take precedence over the less culturally valued one. (Noguchi 1987: 18)

This implies that we need to take the individual participant's choice into consideration. In other words, the values assigned to the face-protecting rule or the conversation-rules should not be considered as absolute values but as relative ones. In addition to this, we also need to take the nature of communication into account.

> Everytime we say something, we also conceal, in the instant we put it into words, everything outside it, by choosing not to put it into words. This is an extremely selective act. There are also times when we find ourselves trying to say something which is difficult to express in words. The act of using words is always accompanied by partial shadowing.
>
> (Doi 1985: 31)

Because of the nature of communication and individual differences, it is not possible to explain cultural norms precisely. However, it will be necessary for us to understand what sort of cultural norms depict 'Japaneseness' and how it is deeply related to communicative style, and specifically, for our purposes, the use of silence in Japanese.

Having stated two essential reasons for the exploration of cultural norms, there is a further point to consider, regarding how different cultural concepts or norms can be compared, analysed and explained. Each culture has its own core values and key words to depict itself. The aim of this section is to compare both Japanese and Western cultural norms and offer some explanation of the similarities and differences. However, it is not possible to explain and understand each culture's specific norms by simply applying one cultural norm to another with literally translated words. This is because individuals do interpret the meaning of a word differently. 'Silence', for example, can be considered alternatively as pauses in interaction, meaningful moments for thought or even as acts of creation, according to the values speakers attach to the word (Suzuki 1987, Wierzbicka 1991). Therefore, cultural norms need to be understood and explained within a specific cultural context. Thus, in this chapter I shall attempt to examine the socio-cultural background underpinning my research topic. I will do this by looking at several Japanese cultural

norms which excert a crucial influence on communicative practices. Initially, this will involve an investigation of how key cultural values such as *Wa* (harmony), *Amae* (dependence), *Tatemae & Honne* (surface level of meaning & true meaning), *Enryo & Sasshi* (self-restraint & mind-reading), and *Omoiyari* (conformity) influence the Japanese communicative styles. This exploration will entail some consideration of the psychological processes govering interaction in Japanese society. Subsequently, the role of silence within this discursive framework will be considered. The importance of *Amae* in Japanese culture will consequently be examined in relation to 'the sense of self and other' implicit in the concept. Next, the role of *Enryo & Sasshi* will be discussed in terms of conversational management. After that, the role of *Tatemae & Honne* will be explored in various contexts. In doing this, I intend to consider the extent to which these cultural values and the use of silence are related to each other. Finally, I shall examine recent changes of Japanese communicative style which are influenced by ongoing social transformation, considering which current developments in Japan may prove influential in effecting such change in the future.

3.1 *Wa*

One of the core Japanese cultural values is the concept of *Wa*. *Wa* can be understood to denote 'harmony,' 'unity,' or 'peace.' Though it is not possible to isolate a single word to explain its meaning, it could be claimed that *Wa* is the basis of all Japanese society and that individuals are expected to create and sustain *Wa* in a common social endeavour to create unity and security. As a result, the Japanese are extremely sensitive to the danger of possible conflict, and its means of conflict avoidance can be observed in various aspects of Japanese culture. This does not mean that there is never argument or conflict in Japanese socio-cultural contexts. However, conflicts tend not to involve heated, unrestrained exchanges, and are usually characterised by attempts

to save face and achieve compromise. As Craig & Wayne (1996) point out, in Japanese society the emphasis on *Wa* is thus reflected in aspects of conflict resolution which seek to avoid loss of face for either party. Where exchanges do take place these are invariably discreet, for:

> Rather than engaging in open, direct confrontation, Japanese prefer quiet, private negotiation in which areas of agreement and prospects for long-term mutual benefit are valued and losing your temper, especially in public, is considered as bad form.
>
> (Craig & Wayne 1996: 27)

Although Craig and Wayne readily concede that Japanese do experience conflict and ill-feeling, these feelings, they suggest:

> They tend to be sublimated much more than in the West. There is a high premium placed on the presentation of at least the appearance of harmony regardless of underlying tensions.
>
> (Craig & Wayne 1996: 27)

Taking this into account, I shall look at the nature of *Wa* in terms of its function and also examine key elements which make *Wa* exist and function in its social context. In order to do this, it may be useful to examine its function from two different perspectives. When looking at its function as a creator in a society, the mutually understood common core values will bring about a social order more easily and effectively without major conflicts if there is a degree of consensus over such values. On the other hand, from an individual's point of view, the existence of *Wa* can ensure an element of psychological security related to belonging to a particular social group. But, how is *Wa* created and maintained? De Mente (1983) claims that creating what he calls 'Japanese social harmony' can be achieved by using two major strategies. One is the proper use of *Kata* (form) with the feeling of righteousness, associated with performing certain rituals in a Japanese social context. The other is the use of 'ambiguity' in interaction among people. He emphasises the importance of *Kata* and its socio-cultural meaning from a Japanese point of view in the following terms:

> 'Shikata' is one of most used and most important words in the Japanese language. It means 'way of doing things ' with special emphasis on the form and order of the process (The root meaning of 'shi' is a combination of 'support' and 'serve' in the sense of an inferior supporting and serving a superior. Kata, by itself, is usually translated as 'form.'
>
> (De Mente 1993: 1)

Furthermore, he explains how 'shikata' functions in Japanese society as follows;

> When used in the Japanese context, the shikata concept includes more than just the mechanical process of doing something. It also incorporates the physical and spiritual laws of the cosmos. It refers to the way things are supposed to be done, both the form and the order as a means of expressing and maintaining harmony in society and culture.
>
> (De Mente 1993: 1)

As he explains, *Kata* - doing things in the right way involves behaving in ways socially expected, behaviour conducive to the promoting of harmony. Then what will happen if this social harmony is threatened as a result of individual transgression? If this occurs, an individual will be considered an outsider within the society. In other words, it can be said that observing *Shikata* is an important and essential requirement for individuals to be admitted and accepted as members of society. This socio-cultural expectation often, in turn, encourages Japanese to avoid taking action individually, particularly if any uncertainty exists over which course of action is most likely to promote mutual well being. As a result, the Japanese are often observed to be reluctant to set any precedent and habitually wait for someone else to take the lead. Moreover, along with the appropriate use of *Kata*, aesthetic considerations also need to be taken into account, as traditionally, the means through which harmony was promoted was highly valued.

It is interesting to speculate on the origin of cultural values. One possible source is Japanese traditional religion which is a key element in Japanese culture. Many Japanese consider themselves to be either Shintoist or Buddhist. However, they are not generally deeply religious.

Religion is important mostly for ceremonies such as weddings or funerals. Koyama (1993), exploring the relationship between Buddhism and Shintoism in the Japanese context, suggests that culturally Buddhism and Shintoism co-exist in harmony.

> Shinto is the indigenous religion of Japan. In its rituals, 'Kami (spirits), consisting of animistic deities such as the spirits of mountains and rivers and the souls of heroes and outstanding leaders, are enshrined and worshipped. When Buddhism was introduced into Japan, it assimilated many aspects of Shinto, with Shinto spirits being seen as incarnations of the Buddha. Both religions lay heavy emphasis on ancester worship, and it is this, rather the more abstract principles of religions belief, that is important to most Japanese. (Koyama 1993: 17)

Furthermore, as De Mente (1993) points out, Shintoism views nature as the ultimate source of harmony. In fact, the fusion of the two religions itself, as well as the incorporation of aspects of Shintoism can be viewed as an expression of this desire to create harmony. For De Mente, the social virtues of *Kata* are also reflected in artistic expression, and in particular, *Noh*, - a form of theatre closely associated with religious worship. According to De Mente,

> The essence of Noh is for the actor to merge his whole personality into the wooden face mask he wears, physically and spiritually to put himself into the mask, allowing himself to be taken over by the character represented by the mask. This total sublimation of character and personality into an unchanging wooden mask, and making an art out of it, with the mask becoming both the medium and the message, was precisely the goal of all 'Kata', and it was characteristic of Japanese culture in general.
> (De Mente 1993: 30)

As this example shows, the use of 'Kata' is an important social requirement for the Japanese in the reproduction of social harmony and unity. In addition, its use can be detected in Japanese artistic expression, which constitutes a symbolic representation of the function of *Kata* in the society. A further strategy which is indispensable for the Japanese in the establishment of social harmony is the use of 'ambiguity' as a security device to circumvent the danger of being caught

in a minority position. Otake (1993), by referring to a Japanese contemporary composer Takemitsu's work (both music and writings), points out that:

> Takemitsu's language is highly symbolic, illusive and sometimes even contradictory. This fact reflects the Japanese culture in which both artistic and practical communications are ambiguous; one can conceive manifold implications from a single statement. This vagueness is considered aesthetic. (Otake 1993: xvii)

The association of *Wa* with 'peace' or 'unity' implies an avoidance of conflict or con-frontation. In order to avoid breaking the harmony and being viewed as an outsider or minority in that group, individuals need to avoid ostracism. Japanese people's often noted ambiguous attitude, behaviour or use of language may have originated from this. For example, they are frequently noted to refrain from expressing themselves clearly or taking a stand until a majority position gradually emerges. Silence is of crucial importance in the construction of these forms of negotiation, and is deployed in its function as *Haragei* (the ability to use language ambiguously in order to get a point across). This communication skill remains one of the most important communicative strategies for the Japanese. They use this skill in both formal and informal social settings, and it is a function of the *Kata* of ambiguity. In this case, silence is used as a highly sophisticated means of interaction which is regarded as an emotional and intuitive ability to communicate without words. Therefore, the proper performance of *Kata* and 'ambiguity' are perceived as effective means for creating *Wa*. As a result, the members of the society are expected to be competent in using these skills in order to be admitted as members of the specific community. Within this context, as Nishiyama (1995) points out, it is considered that to disagree with someone's opinion is to cast doubt on his or her ability and his or her character.

To summarise; one of the most important and complex of Japanese cultural values, *Wa*' has an important role within its social context in creating social order. At the same time, its existence

creates a sense of unity and security for individual members of society. Under the common aim of keeping social harmony, possible conflicts or confrontations are avoided by using two major strategies, *Kata* and 'Ambiguity.' In order to understand how these strategies are effectively used in a specific social context, I shall now look at some other cultural values, such as *Amae, Enryo & Sasshi, Honne & Tanemae, Omoiyari,* which I call sub-cultural values, as they also play a significant part in creating social harmony.

3.2 *Amae*: Self and Other

In cross-cultural studies, one of the most commonly drawn distinctions is that between 'individual'and 'collective' cultures. Gudykunst (1988) sees Individualism-Collectivism as the most important dimension of cultural variability, asserting 'The emphasis in individualistic societies is on individuals' initiative and achievement, while emphasis is placed on belonging to groups in collective societies' (Gudykunst 1988). Japanese culture,which places much value on the group, needless to say, belongs to the collectivistic category. An examination of how the individual 'self' is socially defined will enable us to deepen our understanding of the meaning of cultural values and social structure. Some scholars (Doi 1971, Koyama 1992, Wadden 1993) point out that Japanese are extremely conscious of what others think of them. Spontaneous action may be inhibited for fear of criticism by others. Needless to say, in any society this phenomenon does exist; however, it is necessary for us to consider the degree to which it is present.

With regard to issues of individual autonomy in the Japanese context, Doi (1971) was the first scholar to recognise *Amae* (dependence) as a key concept for the understanding of the psychological makeup of Japanese society as a whole. He also regarded the 'vertical' relationships, characteristic of Japanese social structure as emanating from an emphasis on

Amae, pointing out that *Amae* is the noun form of 'amaeru,' an intransive verb meaning 'to depend and put pressure upon another's benevolence', while also expressing 'helplessness and the desire to be loved.' The term has origins in the mother-child relationship, which connotes the desire to be passively loved, and the unwillingness to be separated from the warm mother-child circle. Doi adds that among the Japanese, these feelings are prolonged into and diffused throughout, adult life. In order to place such a discussion in context, it is therefore necessary for us to look at the Japanese sense of 'self' by examining how individuals are socialized as members of society at different stages of their lives. Here, I shall specifically discuss how Japanese children are socialized and how higher-lower, teacher-student relationships are developed in adulthood.

In this regard, it can be said that Japanese socialization places much emphasis on being conscious of others' perspectives. Japanese social and personal communicative styles are evaluated and interpreted according to their social value. In early socialization, Japanese children are taught to notice how others respond to their speech and actions. In other words, the display of proper behaviour is more important than individual children's autonomy or individuality (Lebra 1992, White 1989,Tobin 1992, Hasegawa 1994). According to the analysis of interaction between Japanese children and mothers conducted by Hasegawa (1994), the mothers' typical way of socializing their children is to say 'You will be laughed at if you do that,' or 'Stop crying, look, your friend is looking at you.' In conclusion, she interprets the mother's role in the process of socialisation as follows;

> [by] telling their children what other people were thinking and feeling, they socialized empathy; by telling them that certain aspects of their behaviour were strange, shameful or frightening in the eyes of others, they were socializing comformity. There were lessons in refusal, avoidance, indirection and ambiguity.
> (Hasegawa 1994: 101)

As Hasegawa asserts, the Japanese sense of 'self' is encouraged from early childhood. However, this does not imply that individual autonomy is discouraged. It suggests instead a difference of priority in the way individuals develop their self-identity within a specific culture. In the Japanese situation, it can be said that the mother-child relationship is the prototype for all interaction based on *Amae.* Doi (1971), for example, sees *Amae* as a model for the paternalism of employers towards employees. Beyond the earliest years, more systemic differences of status such as parent-child, employer-employee, teacher-pupil exist in any culture. In addition, basic human relationships such as those pertaining between guest-host, customer-shop assistant are always present, and each culture has its own way of maintaining such relationships. In the Japanese context, Nishiyama (1995) considers that the appropriate level of politeness, with the required honorifics is a function of maintaining harmonious relations. In the case of the mother-child relationship, it was found that mothers' constant instruction was necessary to make children aware of how they are supposed to behave. Furthermore, in adulthood, as Nishiyama (1995) mentions, the appropriate use of language plays an important role in establishing 'self' within the wider society.

Now I shall specifically look at the language use in higher-lower status relationships, in which, as Koyama has suggested.

> Socially, the intense consciousness of others' opinion is captured in words such as 'sekentei' (social decency) and 'teisai' (social appearance). A frequently heard expression is 'sekentei ga warui,' it appears socially indecent. Such concern about social judgement tends to take precedence over individual expression.
> (Koyama 1992: 112)

As she points out, in the Japanese cultural context, the individual self tends to be determined and recognized by a conception of which rank people belong to in relation to your own. Proper

recognition of the relative status of 'self and other,' is one of the foundations for all relationships throughout life.

> Traditional Japanese society incorporated the 'amae' concept within specifically categorized and defined life roles called 'bun', which determined obligations and life-style within the individual categories. (De Mente 1993: 6)

As suggested above, it is generally agreed that extrafamilial *Amae* relationships are conceived in terms of a metaphor based on the mother-child relationship, in which the person depended upon, - the object of passive 'amae'- is invariably a senior. According to De Mente, such vertical relationships entail that:

> The leader's responsibility for attending to the needs and wants of those under him is indeed great. In return for the amae, he satisfies and indulges, he exacts strong loyalty. He gets a big press, in a society which prefers people to principles more than most. He is constantly deferred to. One goes back again to the prototype of the 'oyabun' (the boss, the parent) and 'kobun' (the child, the follower). (De Mente 1993: 6)

As a result, Beebe & Takahashi (1989) report that in talking to superiors, Japanese try to avoid disagreement, saying nothing if possible, or if forced to show some disagreement, moderating it. They seek harmony with equals. But with their status inferiors, they essentially say, 'I disagree. You are wrong.' This distinctive vertical conception of interpersonal interaction is confirmed by Neustupny, for whom;

> There is a rule that when a clearly senior speaker is present, the right to initiate speech stays with him. It is in particularly bad taste to bombard him with questions and try to engage him in conversation against his wish. Here, unless the superior initiates speech, silence may be appropriate... (Neustupny 1987: 50)

As these examples show, it can be said that not only do life-roles provide strict guidelines for the appropriate relationship in various circumstances, but also the key concept 'amae', the

spirit of dependence, presupposes conscious awareness of the importance of achieving this social rule. Similar to the relationships outlined above, traditionally, in the Japanese context, a teacher is respected not only as someone who has a wide knowledge of an academic subject, but also as someone who provides a moral model. That is, as teachers are looked up to, they are also expected to guide their students in matters other than their own sphere of specialization. This traditional teacher-student relationship might explain why Japanese students appear to outside observers to lack initiative. In reality, the students are being reserved so as not to intrude into their teachers' teaching space in accordance with their role expectation.

This is because they know their socially defined role in their own socio-cultural context and also know the fact that this social requirement must be valued more than anything else as they have been taught and socialized in that way. For this reason, 'spontaneous, unsolicited expression' would contradict the insider's desire for a sense of belonging. This implies that the Japanese, who are in an *Amae* relationship nevertheless still experience anxiety, sensitivity to criticism and fear of being outsiders.

3.3 *Enryo and Sasshi*

> In Japan, the ideal interaction is not one in which the speakers express their wishes and needs adequately and listeners understand comply; but rather one in which each party understands and anticipates the needs of others, even before anything is said. Communication can take place without, or even in spite of, verbalization. The main responsibility lies with the listener, who must know what the speaker means regardless of the words that are used. In this view of communication, mind-reading is seen as both possible and desirable.
>
> (Clancy 1986: 217)

As Clancy points out, in Japanese interaction, the role of the listener is prominent in terms of initiating conversation and ' mind-reading', which is considered an essential communication

skill. Nakano (1995) refers to this type of indirect interaction as 'intuitive communication'. In the Japanese context, this ability is designated *Sasshi*. It is also necessary to understand the role of the speaker when the listener deploys *Sasshi*. In order to make the conversation proceed smoothly and maintain social harmony through oral communication, it has been pointed out that the Japanese refrain themselves from expressing disagreement or individual opinions. Wierzbicka (1991) considers that this sort of 'pressure' for conformity can result in a type of self-restraint refered to as *Enryo*. Ishii (1984: 134) claims *Enryo* and *Sasshi*, defined respectively as self-restraint and mind-reading, work together to make initiative possible. Wierzbicka (1991) further suggests that *Enryo*(self-restraint) can itself be divided into three different categories. Firstly, one way to express *Enryo* is to avoid giving opinions, especially if the speaker may expect the opinion to threaten the social harmony. Second, *Enryo* also involves desires, preferences and wishes. She explains this psychological state as follows;

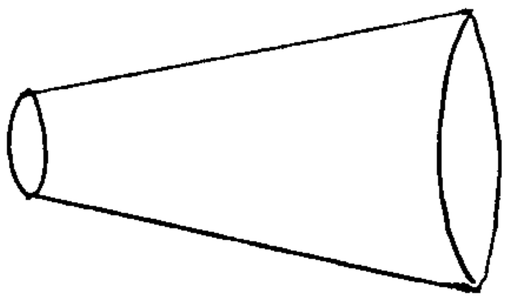
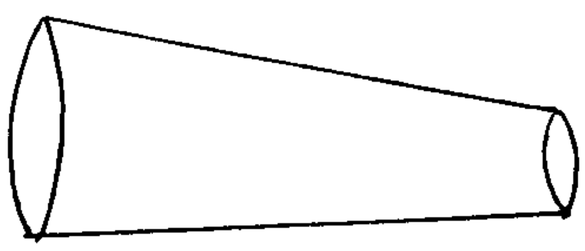
> It calls for a self-effacement or an apparent self-effacement that would stop people from saying clearly not only what they think, but also what they want. To show 'enryo', one is expected not only to refrain from expressing one's opinions, but also to 'side step' choices when they are offered.
> (Wierzbicka 1991: 347)

Lastly, *Enryo* also functions as a form of politeness; a device for maintaining a certain distance from those one does not know well. Thus, *Enryo* is excercised not only to respond to group pressure for comformity but to avoid causing displeasure to others. In short, as Wierzbicka concludes:

> *Enryo* is a product of the suppression of individuality under the pressure of group solidarity and conformity, empathetic considerations for other's convenience or comfort, concern to prevent ego's own embarrassment, and the wish to maintain ego's freedom by avoiding social involvement without hurting.
> (Wierzbicka 1991: 350)

This is the function of *Enryo* from the Japanese cultural point of view. However, it is also

interesting to look at the role of *Enryo* as a Japanese communicative style, and its function as a psychological process of interaction in terms of encoding and decoding. Consider the following:

	Enryo	Vs	Sasshi
	Participant A		Participant B
a)	As a speaker		As a listener
	Enryo Sending	→ Message ←	Sasshi Receiving
b)	As a listener		As a speaker

(Ishii 1984: 56)

According to Ishii & Bruenau (1994), in Japanese communication, the speaker, unconsciously depending on the other person and the communicative situation, simplifies and economizes messages rather than elaborating on them. His or her psychological 'exit' through which the encoded messages are sent out under the impact of 'enryo' is considered to be much smaller than his or her own message receiving 'entrance' called 'sasshi'. Isii and Bruenau add that the significance attached to *Enryo* is such that, the active, exaggerated expression of ideas and feelings can be considered condescending. Ideas and feelings that might hurt the other person or damage the general atmosphere when expressed are carefully sent back for re-examination in an internal self-feedback process. Only those ideas judged safe and vague are allowed to be sent out through the small exit which functions as a screening filter.

Thus, *Enryo* makes the Japanese appear silent, vague and awkward in communicating with superiors, strangers and people from different cultures. On the other hand, as a listener, the participant is expected to possess considerable sensitivity and to receive the message through his

or her wide entrance. In this message-receiving stage, the restricted and vague information is appropriately developed as a result of the mind-reading competence of the listener. In Japanese personal relations, a person of good 'sasshi', who is good at mind-reading or perceiving intuitively people's ideas and feelings is highly regarded.

Having explored the use of *Enryo & Sasshi* in Japanese interaction, it can be suggested that the Japanese are socio-culturally required to be sensitive to such indirect and delicate ways of communicating with others. 'The Japanese highly value intuitive understanding of speakers' messages before they are expressed verbally' (Okazaki 1994: 117). As a possible explanation for this communication strategy, Y. Matsumoto (1988), Ishii (1984) and Clancy (1986) all consider that the extremely homogeneous, group-oriented nature of Japanese society, a key factor contributing to the relatively high degree of non-verbal communication. As Okazaki (1994) points out, the use of *Sasshi & Enryo* may facilitate extensive ellipsis of explicit verbal expression, that is, in effect, the use of silence might be seen as a form of communication.

3.4 *Omoiyari* (Japanese Empathy)

In the previous section, the role of *Enryo & Sasshi* in Japanese interaction was examined from a psychological perspective. It was suggested that the use of *Enryo* (self-restraint) by a speaker and the use of *Sasshi* (mind-reading) by a listener play an extremely significant role in making conversation run smoothly in Japanese interaction. *Enryo* promotes a relative degree of apparent consensus during conversation as open dissent and particularly interruption are discouraged. In addition to the Japanese use of self-restraint, there is another important sub-cultural value which is an indispensable element of being a good listener; *Omoiyari*, or (empathy). Lebra (1976) defines this as 'the ability to feel what others are feeling.' However, Mizutani (1981) also emphasizes that *Omoiyari* leads the Japanese to extremely strong attitudes

of consideration towards others and concern about what they are thinking as well. In order to perform *Omoiyari,* it is necessary to be aware of the sort of attitudes or behaviours required. Akita (1995) provides three basic principles as follows;

1) listen attentively
2) listen patiently — without interruption
3) listen sympathetically

(Akita 1995: 82)

According to her, here, interruption refers to violative or dominance-related interruptions. The avoidance of such interruptions is then considered to emanate from a fear of alienation within a particular community, broadly defined as Japanese society. In Western society (here, I refer in particular to English-speaking societies such as Britain, America, Canada and Australia), interruption is in contrast, encouraged to make the interaction successful via the maximal exchange of opinions, regardless of the degree of divergence. In contrast, in Japanese communication, it is considered that argument, disagreement or confrontation is likely to lead to silence or embarrassment provoking negative feelings such as anger, hatred or disgust. Encouraging such a situation to develop would inevitably be seen in Japanese society as a display of the listener's immaturity. In addition, neglecting *Omoiyari* is held to indicate listener impoliteness or rudeness, both considered grave violations of face.

The role and meaning of *Omoiyari* can be summarised in the following three significant characteristics. First, a high degree of sensitivity towards the speaker's feeling and opinions is encouraged on the part of the listener. Second, the listener's patience towards the speaker is emphasized. Finally, the listener's ability to avoid confrontation or conflict with the speaker is highly regarded. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that different degrees of 'Empathy' exist and vary according to social and situational contexts. That is, different speaker-listener relations require different degrees of *Omoiyari*, according to considerations of such matters as

age, social status, intimacy or gender. By examining the role of the listener and speaker in Japanese interaction, specifically through discussing some cultural values such as *Enryo & Sasshi* or *Omoiyari*, it seems that the use of silence (here defined as communication without words) plays a key role in Japanese interaction with respect to the listener, with particular regard to turn-taking conventions.

3.5 *Tatemae & Honne* (True meaning& Surface meaning)

Further important Japanese cultural values are embodied in *Honne & Tatemae.* These are related to another pair of words, *Omote* (the surface or front) and *Ura* (the back). Moeran (1988) explains their meaning in more detail:

> What is 'Omote' is in fact a superficial veneer, while 'Ura' is close to the inner reality' of the Japanese character. The distinction between 'Public' and 'Private', 'Form' and 'Content' and 'Authority' and 'Power,'.. Tatemae (principle) and Honne (actuality) comes close to the sociological distinction between 'group' and 'social exchange' models of Japanese social organization. It is in fact the combination of 'uchi' and 'omote' which gives rise to the kind of harmony and consensus that typifies the group model of Japanese society. (Moeran 1988: 14)

Similarly, Doi (1985) characterises the relationship between *Honne & Tatemae* as one distinguishing real feelings from a socially accepted principle:

> 'Tatemae' always implies the existence of a group of people in its background who assent to it. In contrast to this, 'honne' refers to the fact that the individuals who belong to the group, even while they consent to the 'tatemae', each have their own motives and opinions that are distinct from it and they hold these in its background. While 'tatemae' appears in 'omote,' 'honne' is concealed in 'ura.'
> (Doi 1986: 30)

Because of the different socio-cultural values of *Honne & Tatemae* in Japanese society, it can be extremely difficult to find out what is on someone's mind. For example, Clancy (1990) contrasts different values placed on the use of *Honne & Tatemae* by the Americans and the

Japanese in the following terms:

> Americans tend to feel that acting and speaking in accordance with one's 'honne' is a matter of personal integrity. In Japan, individuals may hold their own view, but in the interests of group harmony, should not express it if it conflicts with the opinions of others.
>
> (Clancy 1986: 215)

In the Japanese context, Rosenberger (1992) views the ability to shift fluidly between *ura* and *omote*; *tatemae* and *honne* as a function of *kejime*, the ability to distinguish the private and the personal elsewhere referred to as *wakimae* (Nakano 1995). In relation to childhood development of this notion, Tobin provides the following definition:

> To learn to enjoy ties to peers, to learn to transfer some of the warmth of parent-child relationships to other relationships, to learn to balance the spontaneity enjoyed at home (honne) with formality (tatemae), emotion with control, and family with society, to learn to become, in other words, truly Japanese, the child must be given a chance to move beyond the walls of the home to more complex social interactions.
>
> (Tobin 1989: 204)

As far as adulthood is concerned, Rosenberger (1992) claims that the Japanese value the *Omote,* formal dimension of the 'self' as well as the *ura*, more spontaneous dimension and adds that;

> To have a proper, two tiered Japanese sense of self, one must learn to make much more fluid and subtle distinctions, learn to step back and forth across the gap dividing 'omote' from 'ura' in the course of a single conversation.
>
> (Rosenberger 1992 : 24)

Interestingly, Doi (1985) claims that within Japanese society, the use of *Honne & Tatemae* differs regionally. In Kyoto, - which is situated in the Kansai area (the Western part of Japan), and which used to be the capital of Japan a long time ago - according to Doi, people deal differently with issues of *Tatemae and Honne* in comparsion to other Japanese people. However, Doi (1985) fails to provide specific examples of this. It may be useful, therefore, to outline some personal observations regarding the uses of of *Honne & Tatemae* by Kyoto people, in the

domain of leave-taking. Firstly, during or towards the end of a conversation with guests, the statement "It is nice to hear the sound of *Geta* (a pair of traditional wooden sandal)" is frequent, with the indirect meaning "I wish you to understand that this is the time to finish our conversation." Another example concerns the frequency with which guests are served teas at the end of a meal. The more frequently a cup of tea is offered, the more quickly guests are encouraged to leave. That is, by providing the chance to make a pause during the conversation, the host creates an opportunity for the guest to say " I had better go." This way of leave-taking is extremely indirect and might not be easily noticed by non-Kyoto people. However, it is not difficult to identify possible explanations for such uses of *Honne & Tatemae*, as this way of dealing with others reduces interpersonal friction between people to a minimum in Japan or within any given speech community with shared pragmatic conventions; however, it may cause confusion with non-group members if the host's intention cannot be correctly interpreted.

Clearly, then, it can be said that the requirement of ambiguity is one of the factors responsible for the development of *Tatemae & Honne* as guiding principles in Japanese behaviour. As De Mente (1993) puts it:

> Tatemae refers to a front or facade (public statements) that people put up to obscure their real meaning and intentions (honne). (De Mente 1993: 36)

It can also be said that the use of *Honne & Tatemae* is deeply related to the ambiguous function of silence. For example, reconsidering the example of leave-taking by Kyoto people, providing a space through offering tea involves the use of *ma* (silence), 'a pregnant pause' or 'leaving space' that the listener is expected to fill in with his or her own interpretation. Misunderstanding is a likely outcome when individuals are unaware of this kind of cultural decoding. In addition, the reciprocal relationship between words and silence can only be viewed in the context of *Honne & Tatemae.* Picard suggests that:

> Language and silence belong together: Language has knowledge of silence as silence has knowledge of language. The word would be without depth if the background of silence were missing. (Picard 1948: 41)

3.6 Japanese cultural values and students expected behaviour in class

> I had a hard time getting my students to talk and began believing in stereotypes about the shy and silent Japanese students. The more frustrated and disenchanted I became with these classes, the easier it became to lay blame on what I perceived to be the students' lack of interest rather than on my pedagogy. It was easier to believe the stereotypes rather than looking within, rather than entertaining notions of ethnocentricity and searching for culturally sensitive ways of encouraging student participation.
>
> (J. Anderson 1996: 1)

The issue of 'stereotypes' of particular cultures was discussed in Chapter 1 as an important consideration for the foreign language teacher. In considering the problem of stereotypes, I suggested that stereotypical views do not only blind us to real differences across cultures but also limit our understanding of unique individual behaviour as a result of such restricted views. As Sarbaugh (1990) points out, stereotypes can be also regarded as a form of 'common defence for reducing culture shock.' This is because keeping ourselves away from complicated, delicate and risky intercultural interaction will be easier than coping with the ambiguity inevitably experienced during intercultural communication. This was clearly acknowledged in the above statement by Anderson (1996) on teaching English to Japanese students. It is, of course, never an easy task for both teachers and learners to overcome the 'culture shock' experienced in class. Murray (1996: 18) also claims that the conflict between Japanese cultural values and classroom activities in the Japanese EFL context exists as follows.

> One important effect of this increased awareness of CLT [Communicative language teaching] in a culture tuned very much to traditional methods of foreign language

> teaching has been to create a conflict between Japanese cultural values as they are manifested in the classroom, and many of the kinds of activities closely associated with a communicative approach.....The dilemma facing these teachers [Japanese English teachers], therefore, is the extent to which they should be/ are prepared to compromise fundamental attitudinal and behavioural traits in the interests of what is considered to be sound pedagogy. (Murray 1996: 18)

It is, therefore, important to understand the Western perspective regarding the supposed passivity of Japanese students of language, in order to draw attention to the complexity and diversity of culture and its impact on classroom interaction. For Anderson, clearly speaking from personal experience:

> The teacher who just wants a straight answer can't understand why the students always have to talk to their neighbour before answering, or simply remain silent, is banging his head against a wall. Similar frustration must be felt by the student who is giving the teacher many non-verbal cues that he is not going to answer the question, but the teacher keeps asking for her opinion. Students may begin to form opinions about their new Western teacher as being very insensitive and even rude, which causes a lot of uneasiness and uncertainty about how to behave. And teachers form opinions and perpetuate inaccurate stereotypes of students who don't have opinions, can't think on their own, and refuse to speak out in class. (J. Anderson 1996: 5)

In order to reconcile these conflicting relationships, an understanding of the influence of Japanese cultural norms on student behaviour is indispensable. This is the matter we shall turn to next, through an examination of the Japanese educational system, especially focusing upon the way students are socialised into the process of learning. Thereafter, I shall look at some aspects of Japanese educational principles in each stage of learning at schools in connection with Japanese cultural norms.

Some scholars (Tobin 1991, Anderson 1992, Rolen 1991, Finkelstein 1991) have identified several key characteristics of Japanese students' classroom behaviours. For example, Anderson

(1992) characterizes Japanese educational principles as 1) formalized-speech making, 2) consensual decision making, 3) group-mindedness and 4) listener-responsibility. In addition to this, Rohlen (1991) claims that the issue of 'boundary' between *Uchi* and *Soto* (inside and outside) is also a significant requirement in achieving an understanding of Japanese educational principles. Furthermore, Kennedy (1991) and Fukue (1991) emphasize the importance of conformity and harmony in Japanese education. The characteristics pointed out above are important elements which teachers need to know in order to understand a students' background. It is also important to know that there are differences and contradictions in educational principles between Japanese learners' culture and the target culture. That is, although they talk, ask questions and participate in class activities, they do so in a different way. Such basic educational differences cause problems for them when they learn a foreign language which is associated with a very different type of culture. Confronted suddenly with a new way of behaving, students are apt to become shocked and confused. In the same way, new teachers from different cultural backgrounds experience 'culture shock' as a result of what is interpreted as a passive response. This is because both the manner and methods are totally new to both parties. Having examined several Japanese cultural norms and Japanese educational principles pointed out by several scholars, I shall now examine the extent to which such key cultural norms as *Wa, Amae, Honne & Tatemae, Enryo & Sasshi* and *Omoiyari* are evident in students' classroom behaviour.

Formality, group-mindedness and *Wa*

The importance of *Wa* (harmony) and group-mindedness are emphasized both in public and in the classroom. In order to maintain this social harmony, 'formality' can be a means of creating *Wa* by discouraging non-conformity. In relation to this, the United States Department of Education (USDE 1991) claims that the Japanese prefer to define themselves on the basis of their

commonly held beliefs and values in spite of drastic changes of popular culture or life style and concludes that there remains a high degree of public consensus regarding social values and appropriate standards of behaviour. Anderson (1992) suggests that Japanese people have a belief that their identity derives from the groups they belong to. Therefore, the unity of the group takes precedence over individual ideas and opinions. It is not clear to what extent the need for group consensus is a phenomenon experienced at a conscious level. Whether or not this is the case, it seems that students are trained as learners in culturally specific ways which differ from those associated with Western educational structures. USDE (1991) also claims that the origins of the Japanese commitment to education lie in a Confucian and Buddhist heritage in which great respect is accorded to learning and educational endeavour as a means to personal and societal improvement. Therefore, there is a strong consensus that schools have the obligation and authority to teach fundamental Japanese values as the foundation of proper moral attitudes and personal habits. In order to achieve the purpose of this social aim, individual expression and creativity are given less prominence within the ethos of the school, than the promotion of harmonious inter group relations. This is dependent upon an emphasis of the importance of empathy with others. The USDE once again notes:

> Teachers attempt to foster group cohesion and a strong group spirit by avoiding overt recognition of differences in individual ability and minimizing one-against-one competition. Daily life in a Japanese classroom requires considerable mutual assistance and adaptation of individual views and interests to group goals and standards of behaviour. The heavy emphasis on group activities and social consensus results in considerable conformity in behaviour. (USDE 1991: 89)

Such aspects of the Japanese classroom are also given prominence by Anderson (1996) who regards this characteristic group-mindedness as the single most inhibiting factor in encounters between Western teachers and Japanese students. From the perspective of the

former, the latter appear to go to great extremes not to stick out as individuals from the Western point of view. He also proposes that activities and techniques which aim at making students speak out need to be structured in a way which allows students to feel inconspicuous. These would include an avoidance of large group open-ended questions, which call on students to give their opinions in front of the whole class spontaneously. He also recommends that activities need to be organised in an orderly and predictable manner into activities so students know what to expect and when. He points out that in order to reduce stress and allay fears of appearing too conspicuous, letting them know when their roles are better assigned clearly, and in advance, with clear guidance on turn-taking is important, if Western approaches are to succeed. It is also extremely important, of course, for teachers to behave in a culturally sensitive way. Conversely, the fear of appearing conspicuous is also a valuable starting point for students to gain and experience of alternative ways of communicating with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds. Without challenges, the culture shock they might actually encounter in cross cultural situations could be more painful. Therefore, it may be useful to encourage a gradual transition or adjustment from the learners' own culturally determined classroom behaviour to a Western style set of classroom interactional patterns.

This is, of course, not as simple an issue as suggested here. Taking into account the need for the Japanese to communicate in English conversation, there is no definite right answer as to what extent learners need to be trained to or taught in the Western way. It largely depends on the needs and aims of learners. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the following sections as well as in the concluding chapter.

<u>Cultural Boundaries and Social roles</u>

In discussing cultural boundaries, Doi (1985) and Befu and Mannari (1992) among others have stressed the Japanese distinction between *Uchi* and *Soto*: This distinction of home and outside, they argue, is also reflected in the notion of Japaneseness, and in the attitude of the Japanese to outside cultural influence. Thus, for Manari and Befu,

> The gaijin syndrome is a poignant expression of the the separateness which the Japanese are trying to assert.... The term gaijin is a label forever attached to concisions and symbolizes permanent outside status.... By setting gaijin immutably apart, the Japanese can maintain a distinct identity and incorporate foreign cultural elements simultaneously.
>
> (Mannari and Befu 1991: 89)

Mannari and Befu further discuss a related phenomenon often observed in Japan in which American-born-and raised *nisei* and *sansei* (second or third generation) emigrants, having returned to Japan, are often turned down in their applications for positions to teach English. This indicates the presence of a form of reverse racism in which ethnically Japanese applicants are automatically assumed less competent in their native language than white counterparts. Although the students' own preference for white teachers has been used as an excuse for this practice in my own teaching experience in Japanese secondary schools, students attach no importance to such considerations, so long as teachers contribute effectively to the creation of a comfortable learning environment. In fact, many *nisei* and *sansei* are working successfully as teachers throughout Japan. Attitudes towards what constitutes the cultural boundary clearly, nevertheless, remain pervasive.

As far as social roles are concerned, the following statement shows the importance of understanding social roles in Japanese society.

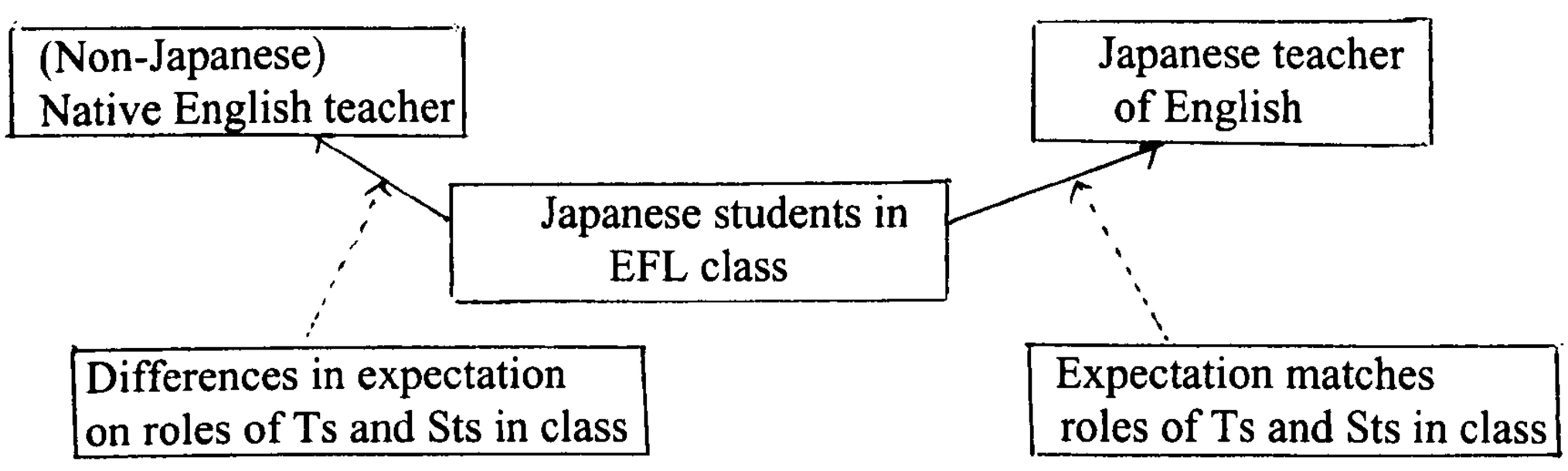
> The Japanese word teacher-*sensei*-literally means

> 'born before'. In Japan, many valued relationships involve a difference in age. Those between parents and children and between teachers and students are the most prominent, and they provide models for better relationships. (Rolen 1991: 20)

In addition, Finkelstein (1992) sees Japanese teachers as a model of moral character.

> No matter what the setting, Japanese teachers are moral and aesthetic overseers responsible for habit information as well as intellectual guidance....Japanese teachers, unlike American teachers, assume fundamental responsibility for moral education and character development and manage classrooms in a manner that elevates and reinforces the importance of the group. (Finkelstein 1991: 79)

These claims can be summarised as follows;



	Japanese students' expectation	Reason
Japanese Teachers' Expectation	Power + / Power +	T as a model of a moral character
Non-Japanese Teachers' Expectation	Power + / Power = /-	St-autonomy is respected and emphasized

Consensual-decision making and conformity

In terms of consensual decision-making, because of the importance of groupism in the social context, there is respect for a general agreement or majority opinion. In EFL classes in Japan, students tend to co-operate in attempts solve problems or answer questions together. It is therefore usual in the Japanese classroom for a student to ask a neighbour how and what to

answer in the event of uncertainty. Anderson (1996) also regards consensual decision-making as affecting classroom behaviour and as resulting from group-mindedness, in that a response is not considered the responsibility of any one individual, but rather all participants' inputs. He describes the pervasiveness of this phenomena as follows:

> It is not only limited to groups and is often seen when individual students are called upon to give a response. More often than not the student will almost immediately turn to her neighbour, to check her understanding of the question, to seek confirmation that her own answer is acceptable or even to solicit an answer from the other person if she does not have one of her own. In this way, her response is no longer a reflection of her own individual thought, but owned by more than one person and therefore culturally sanctioned.
>
> (J. Anderson 1996: 68)

Likewise, maintaining harmonious relationships is far more important than proving whether one was right or wrong. Anderson also raises the important issue of the extent to which teachers and students should compromise this phenomena on this practice, arguing:

> I think this should be allowed for and that the teacher must be patient with such exchanges, for they are more than as signs of uncertainty or insecurity.
>
> (J. Anderson 1996: 68)

This principle of avoiding personal confrontation in order to maintain smooth personal relationships then, necessarily plays a role in the EFL class and gives rise to a number of important questions; how can EFL teachers treat these cultural values in the class which has different culturally determined conventions in learning the target language? Should students be encouraged to communicate in the Western way, or should teachers completely adapt their way of teaching into the Japanese style in which students have been trained since their childhood? If adjustment or negotiation of communicative style is necessary, to what extent should both teachers and students be responsible for it?

Lastly, it is also useful to consider how Japanese students have been trained as learners in general since their childhood. Peak (1991) reports that initial training in learning skills and attitudes has two key components in Japanese early childhood education. The first stage involves careful watching and second requires learners to acquire basic routines until they become habitual actions. The first element, learning through watching has two aims: one is to encourage learner motivation and the other to make learners listen quietly and attentively. That is, the lesson situation is one in which a quiet focusing of attention is required. That is, listening and concentration training are key aims at this initial stage. The second element, the explicit training of detailed routines such as a ritualized greeting at the beginning of class seems uncomfortably rigid and authoritarian from the Western point of view. However, Peak (1991) regards it as showing willingness to learn or commitment for learning. The following is Peak's view of how Japanese teachers value the role of concentration.

> Japanese teachers of all disciplines view the ability to concentrate as a skill that is developed through practice, rather than as a function of personality or a child's tendency to be obedient.
> (Peak 1991: 34)

This pedagogical issue will be discussed further in the final Chapter.

<u>Gender differences in language use in Japan</u>

In this section, I shall discuss to what extent gender differences are related to the use

of language in general amd more specifically in the Japanese context. As well as the review of the previous literature of gender differences in language use, I shall particularly look at the relationship between Japanese cultural norms and differences in the use of silence between Japanese women and men. That is, I will explore what kind of roles and communicative styles are required for men and women from a socio-cultural point of view.

Gender differences in language use

> Even with an otherwise very homogeneous group, such as members of the same generation within the same ethnic group within the same culture, there will be major and very significant differences between the discourse system of men and women. Our point is that any individual must be understood to belong to multiple discourse systems, which interact with each other in any particular situation.
> (Scollon and Scollon 1995: 240)

As Scollon and Scollon mention, individuals belonging to different social groups in terms of gender, occupation, nationality and gender, is one of the important aspects for individuals in communicating with others in any society. As for this gender issue, many scholars claim that there are differences in language use between men and women (Lakoff 1975, Tannen 1982, Cameron 1992, Coates 1993, Holmes 1995) and their studies clearly show that there are different uses of language between men and women in terms of linguistic form (eg. use of lexical items), or style of speech according to the social context in which they are engaged in. This indicates that this cultural aspect (gender differences) is a significant factor which has much influence on determining individuals' communicative style in each social context.

Having known this fact, it is necessary to examine how and to what extent gender differences are deeply related to the use of silence in the Japanese context. Therefore, in this section, I will firstly review previous studies on gender differences in language use, then I will specifically look at how men and women use silence differently by reviewing previous literatures. Lastly, I will discuss whether social change in Japanese context have influence on changing the communicative style of Japanese people including the use of silence or not and if so, how.

Men's language and women's language

There are interesting studies on gender differences in language use. As James and Drakich

(1993) point out, most previous accounts of gender differences in the amount of talk within the language, have concentrated mostly on the common finding that men talk more than women in mixed-sex interaction. However, different accounts or reasons for this gender difference have been suggested by each scholar. Although it is, in this study, not intended to argue or to decide which account depicts truth as findings, I shall look at possible origins of gender differences in language use suggested by several influential studies on this topic in order to understand language use by men and women. An early influential study on women's language use was by Lakoff (1975), which was based on her personal observation of women's language use. Lakoff refers to 'acceptability' in language use and claims that language use changes depending on the position in society of the language user, that a sentence that is 'acceptable' when uttered by a woman is 'unacceptable' when uttered by a man (Lakoff 1975: 47). Moreover, according to Lakoff's observation and finding, women tend to use a language that avoids direct and forceful statements, and relies on forms that convey hesitation and uncertainity. It appears that women talk less and are quieter than men generally.

Furthermore, other scholars such as Holmes (1995,1998), Cameron (1992), Coates (1993) and Tannen (1982, 1990) have examined gender differences in language use from different perspectives. Holmes takes a functional approach to 'sex differences' and strongly claims that linguistic behaviour is powerfully affected by context, and by people's perceptions of the appropriate usage for a particular context. For example, Holmes reports that there is abundant evidence from research in the United States and from Britain demonstrating that males tend to talk more than women in public contexts where talk is highly valued and attracts positive attention. Moreover, men's dominance of talking time is also reported in specific contexts such as classrooms, where talk is a valuable means of meaning. From these examples, Holmes

claims that men tend to value public, referentially oriented talk, while women value and enjoy private affectively oriented talk (Holmes 1995:37). On the other hand, Tannen (1982, 1990) argues that observed differences in the talk of American women and men arise from the distinctive norms, conceptions and interpretations of friendly conversation they learn in segregated subcultures. Furthermore, Scollon and Scollon (1995) also raise the issue of conceptions of particular events by men and women, and claim that 'the interpretive framework' is an issue in relation to gender differences in language use as follows;

> ....., what is important is the difference in expectations in any particular situation. In some cases, women use indirect approaches to communication while men are expecting more direct statement and the men who are expressing themselves indirectly. The issue is not directness and indirectness, the issue is the current interpretive framework.
>
> (Scollon and Scollon 1995: 231)

Thus, different approaches on studies of men's and women's language, claim that there are gender differences in language use. Each approach depicts some aspects of language use by men and women. As for the educational context, Swan (1992) also compared the language use by boys and girls at school and reports that boys talked more in general. Although the studies of this topic are mostly conducted in the Western, English speaking social context, Claire and Redpath (1989) provide an account of gender and ethnic imbalances in classroom discussion in England. Their findings are as follows;

> 1. Boys averaged three times as many speaking turns as girls.
> 2. Asian boys took little part in class discussion.
> 3. Asian girls participated least of all pupils. Quieter pupils including Asian girls, did participate more in carefully selected small groups.
>
> (Claire and Redpath 1989 cited from Swan 1992: 64)

Their findings are interesting since their study has looked at different language use in a much wider sociocultural context. One of the striking claims by Uchida (1992) is that gender does not

exist independently of other social factors such as region, ethnicity, age, class, sexual orientation and religion and says that these elements are constantly in interaction. As Uchida claims, the issue of gender differences in language use can not be examined without taking other social factors into accounts. As well as the expansion of the research context, it is necessary to take several important factors into consideration for the further study. Points given by James and Clarke (1993) are useful to look at;

> 1. Age
> 2. Degree of intimacy
> 3. Personality factors
> 4. Status or power in the interaction resulting from some other source
> 5. Natural versus laboratory setting
> 6. Dyad versus group interaction
> 7. Topic of conversation
> 8. Change in gender behaviour over the years
>
> (James and Clarke 1993: 178)

Thus, it can be said that in order to understand gender differences in language use, much deeper and wider research under different circumstances needs to be conducted.

Use of silence by men and women

From the review of previous research, it could be understood that one common finding was men's talkativeness and dominance, especially in public context. That is, as Scollon and Scollon note;

> Women tend to be voluble in small and more intimate groups, taciturn in large and more formal or public situations. Men tend to be more voluble in those more public contexts and fall into taciturnity or monologues in situations of intimacy. (Scollon and Scollon 1995: 240)

From this, it appears that women tend to be quieter participants in public. However, as Scollon and Scollon give an example, in a business meeting of a dozen people, both men and women, it has been observed that most of the talk is dominated by the men in the group. On

the other hand, a similar business meeting in which the participants are all women finds them highly voluble with rapid exchanges of turn (Scollon and Scollon 1995: 232). Likewise, the actual situational context show different image of men's and women's language use. This implies that the actual quantity of talk by women is likely to be less than men in the mixed gender situation and therefore, men tend to dominate the amount of talk. This might make women appear quiet and silent.

Turning the shift to actual use of silence rather than general impression of the use of silence by men and women, Pilkington (1992:460) claims that where a woman would have been likely to agree or at least respond, there were often long pauses between speakers. In this case, silence functions as a strategy for agreement or participation. On the other hand, Sattel (1983) argues that silence is used by men as part of male dominance. He claims that male inexpressiveness is a method for achieving control in both mixed and all-male conversation. From his finding, it can be understood that men's dominance can be gained by being silent and not only by expressive talk. Although these findings are interesting, there are very few studies on the use of silence by each gender, especially across different socio-cultural contexts. Further study in this area would make us understand language use by men and women more deeply.

Gender differences in Japanese use of silence

As for the use of silence by Japanese men and women, there are studies of Japanese women's language use depicting some characteristic features such as frequent use of honorific expression, softness of voice and modesty (Smith 1992, Ide 1991). However, there are no studies on more specific uses of silence by Japanese men and women. Nevertheless, the strong tie between Japanese women's use of language and the Japanese social context is regarded as an important factor by Reynolds (1998). Reynolds considers that the male / female language dichotomy in

Japan is not a mere differentiation of the two sexes but that it reflects the structure of society where women were defined as the inferior sex. Smith (1992) more specifically refers to the image of Japanese women.

> One aspect of femininity training is modesty in speech. This is broken down further into requirements for retience, softness of voice, a polite or feminine style of speech, and covering the mouth when talking or laughing.
> (Smith 1992: 62)

In this sense, the use of silence by Japanese women functions as a maintenance of the traditional image of women in Japan. That is, the traditional image of Japanese women seems to relate to the use of silence by them so that their speech style meets the socio-cultural expectation. However, recently the value of talk and the role of women in Japanese society has been changing. Women are gaining more in social status than men are. Then, will the use of silence by Japanese women be changing? I shall discuss this aspect in the next section.

Japanese men's and women's expected behaviour in communication

> It is commonly held that one aspect of the reflection of social gender in Japan is the relative gender 'politeness' of female speech - held to be expressed in part by women's frequent use of honorific and humiliative forms - is linked to their social powerlessness, at least in the public domain.
> (Smith 1992: 59)

Smith also draws attention to an aspect of femininity training, '*hikaeme*' (modesty) in Japan, asserting that Japanese women are required to communicate for reticence with softness of voice, a polite or feminine style of speech and a covering of the mouth when talking or laughing (Smith 1992: 62). However, recently some scholars (White 1992, Rolen and Steinhoff 1984) have pointed out that Japanese women's use of language and their image is in a state of transition as a result of their gaining more equal social status with men. Reynolds (1998: 229) also claims that the male / female speech dichotomy stands in obvious

contradiction to a new social order based on an egalitarian ideology.

Some studies of Japanese women's use of language depict these processes in contrasting ways. For instance, Smith (1992) analysed the language use of Japanese women in a television detective programme and claimed that women are empowering their own speech by using 'Motherese Strategy' when a female senior gives an order to a male junior. Smith interprets this as the effective performance of the full (and considerable) authority of the Japanese mother. That is, that solidarity is simultaneously invoked by the use of forms common to mother- child interactions should require no further comment (eg. *-sai,- tte*), while men tend to use more direct expression ending with (eg. *-ro, -yo,-na)*. Some observers (Suzuki 1986, Smith 1992, Neustupny 1987) have in turn related such changes in language use by Japanese women to social, economic developments within the society. For instance, Smith particularly pays attention to a dilemma for Japanese women in nontraditional occupations and for those who hold gender-atypical occupational statuses in modern society. According to Reynolds (1998), conflict arises between the traditional role of the woman at work as a server of the tea, and contemporary notions of equality. Another interesting example of the conflict phenomenon involving women's use of language is provided by Jugaku (1975) and Neustupny (1987). According to their observation, young girls (Japanese secondary school students) often employ male forms when communicating among themselves, but switch over to the more conversational feminine forms when their speech is monitored.

> It has been noted that the use of *boku* 'I' (male) by Junior high school girls has recently become quite common in Tokyo. Girls who were interviewed in a TV programme explain that they cannot compete with boys in classes, in games or in fights with *watashi* 'I' (female)..... However, since they know that *boku*-language is not acceptable in the society outside schools,

> they use *watashi*-langauge in talking to 'members of society.' In other words, as school girls, they are bilinguals who have two distinct codes, *boku*-language *watashi*-language. They select a code according to situation.
> (Jugaku 1979. Cited from Reynolds 1998)

Having briefly summarised a few studies on the use of language by Japanese women, it is clear that conflict exists in many sub-cultural Japanese contexts as a result of the rapid social change. However, it is important to raise three issues; 1) What are Japanese women doing by changing or retaining particular forms of language? Are both those who hold occupational status and school girls stepping forward in the same direction as men? 2) To what extent is Japanese society coming to terms with this changing social situation? 3) How far do differences of participants' background such as age, degree of intimacy, personality, status and power affect their use of language as men and women?

In addressing the first point, it appears that different situations and aims make women in different age groups and in different social status use more male-oriented language. Reynolds (1998), is referring to women included in professional positions requiring assertive talk, and comments:

> These women admit that their language does not have the same authoritative force as that of their male counterparts. (Reynolds 1998: 306)

It seems that women might use male-oriented language in an attempt to gain greater authority, and to resist discrimination. In contrast, school girls' use of 'boku-language' appears to be a more transient phenomenon associated, according to Reynolds (1998), with 'the surface defiance of the trend', or 'the avowedly rebellious behavior' of the sub-group. This is held to arouse curiosity but never the anger that would be invoked if females with full membership in society stepped over the gender boundary in a more direct challenge to male dominace. Thus, it can be

argued that the aim of using more male-oriented language differs according to women's age and social status.

The second big issue is to what extent Japanese society accepts or negotiates this change as a social phenomenon and the extent to which women genuinely view language as a means of securing equal social status with men? Drawing on the example of a young female teacher in Japan, Reynolds(1998) claims that for a woman teacher to be successful under present circumstances, she has no choice but to use defeminized patterns in order to strengthen solidarity. Also, from my own experience as a secondary school teacher, I was aware of the need to adopt rather male-oriented forms of speech in order to establish control in class; forms of speech which I never used outside school. What is less clear, however, is the degree to which this could be described as teacher-language rather than as men's language. However, with regard to this issue, resistance to the defeminisation also constitutes an important social phenomena.

This may arise from the fact that a teacher is evaluated not only by students but also by parents and the principal, who are critical if a female teacher's behaviour deviates from traditional norms; what constitutes, for Reynolds (1998), 'the existence of the objective conditions for conflict'. That is, the social expectation that women, regardless of their roles, should talk *onnarashiku* (feminine like) is so strong that women teachers themselves often view defeminization negatively.

> An individual who initiates conflict behaviour under such conditions might easily yield to the pressure of society and be persuaded that it is she who is wrong, that it is her behaviour that must be corrected. The role of society in this process is crucial, especially in Japan, where the desire for harmony is so deep-rooted in the culture that deviating from the cultural norm- destroying the harmony - is almost suicide.
>
> (Reynolds 1998: 303)

Another important issue emerges from the use of masculine like language, insofar as it is not clear whatever processes associated with defeminisation are a matter of conscious control. As one female Japanese teacher noted in the press:

> I tend to speak rough language with in imperative tone in spite of my efforts not to, perhaps, because I am a teacher. I always think regretfully that this is not good for me. (The Asahi, 18 July, 1984)

She also observes that ambivalent language use associated with female discourse would not be able to meet the demands of a career. These processes cannot be entirely attributed to issues of gender equality. However, a dilemma also exists for the individual woman, who may experience ambiguous feelings about adopting a profession which requires her to use language she is less than comfortable with.

For Reynolds, Japanese female speech plays a crucial role, therefore, in situations such as these, in keeping Japanese women in traditional roles. He also goes on to say that attempts to remove the boundary between the male and female speech division inevitably end in failure, as a result of self-restraint on the part of female speakers who foresee social punishment. It appears that the way women are supposed to talk has, in reality, changed little, the norm functions as a conservative face. He assserts, however, rapid social change may in future intensify conflict. However, a dilemma remains between the extent to which individuals wish to retain their traditional forms of language with conventional female roles or to seek to change in language in the interests of equality. Currently, while there are women who use more masculine forms of speech, perhaps as a reflection of their social position, many wish to retain feminine styles of speech in spite of these factors. Therefore, the current situation cannot be considered merely as

a matter of failure or success in eliminating the boundary between men and women. That is, it is questionable, to what extent Japanese women are really wishing to gain status, for what reason, and what strategies would prove most effective in pursuit of this.

3.8 Concluding Remarks: the future of Japanese communicative style

During the discussion of Japanese key cultural values in communication, it was suggested that social harmony *Wa* is respected and socially required to maintain social harmony. In order to achieve this socio-culturally determined aim, certain communicative attitudes or behaviours tend to be adopted in Japanese society. For example, the communicative style of the Japanese is characterized by such cultural values as *Amae, Enryo & Sasshi, Omoiyari and Honne & Tatemae.* These characteristic features are a particularly significant feature of Japanese communication. However, it is essential to be consciously aware that any language is a living entity, rather than being rigidly fixed; therefore, a proper understanding of current practice must include an examination of recent and emerging developments in language use today.

Historically, the Japanese language has always borrowed loan words from other languages and uses Chinese characters as an essential part of writing. This diversification of language brings out the collision and mixing of different language systems. As Mizutani (1981) notes,

> The Japanese language will continue to change in unforeseeable ways. The dizzying pace of change is evident if we simply consider that the physical distance between the people of the world will undoubtedly be shortened during the last half of this century.
> (Mizutani 1981: 112)

He also refers to Japanese men and women's language use.

> Particular expressions used only by women are thought to demonstrate their gentleness. But, this philosophy of there being a womanly way of talking, and the resulting distinctive speech forms, will, of course change if there is any shift in what

> is expected of women and men in Japanese society. In language as well, women's speech may be becoming some- what more masculine, but at the same time a larger portion of men's speech is becoming more feminine. (Mizutani 1981: 166)

Language use in Japan

Furthermore, it is also necessary to look at how Japanese people's views of language and language education, the ideas underlying debates about language education, policy and methods have recently been undergoing considerable change. Nowadays, especially in the last five years, many different views have been expressed concerning language and language education. Nevertheless, in the Japanese scheme of things, aesthetic values, harmony and the maintenance of the correct order of things will no doubt continue to take precedence over what are often regarded in the west to be ethical and moral principles. In spite of the mixing of different language systems, some scholars (Mizutani 1981, Suzuki 1978) have continued to assert strongly that the Japanese must guard against losing a major share of the Japanese linguistic inheritance, by opting for the expedient solutions under pressure from heterogeneous elements. Mizutani (1981) specifically fears that the psychological or emotional values carried by the Japanese language might be lost and regards the Japanese dilemma as having to choose between the traditional communicative style and a more factual or practically oriented, economical and logical use of language:

> If one is only interested in precisely conveying the facts, Enryo is not necessary. But, in actuality, a considerable percentage of the Japanese feel uncomfortable requesting something without Enryo, or deference, in their language. (Mizutani 1981: 158)

Suzuki (1978) also explains how the Japanese try to solve the problem outlined above by adopting the familiar Japanese way of absorbing cultural change:

> The built-in need for avoiding disruption of any kind also is partly responsible for the Japanese habit of importing foreign ideas and things, categorizing them, and keeping them separate from traditional Japan. This approach has allowed them to graft layers of foreign culture onto their own without losing their own distinctive ways. (Suzuki 1978: 12)

That is, it can be said that despite Japan's copious borrowing from China or European nations today, once the Japanese have imported an idea, a custom, or a product, it is transformed in order to suit local tastes or circumstances. In the past, such language change has been incorporated and institutionalised to such an extent that, at secondary school, Japanese pupils usually learn basic classic Chinese literature as part of Japanese language or literature classes. These Chinese works, called *Kanbun*, are written in Chinese. However, the Japanese have transformed their grammar to reflect the Japanese system.

From this discussion of current language use in Japan, it is clear that conflict has emerged as a result of language change brought about by often external forces of social change while some have sought to embrace such linguistic change, or incorporate new forms into the existing system. For others this has been met with resistance and a defence of more traditional forms against what is often perceived to be an external threat to linguistic and cultural identity. On an individual level this sort of conflict which is inevitably relfected in communication creates a certain friction unconsciously both between Japanese people and in cross-cultural communication.

Thus, another important consideration is the individual's view of how one should live and communicate. On any occasion, linguistic problems are not a matter of words alone. The Japanese language will continue to change, but how? This may depend on how individuals, as members of society and the creators of their own culture, percieve their socio-cultural values.

Chapter 4

The use of silence in the Japanese context: Japanese conversational management

4.0 Cultural differences in interaction

Various functions of the use of silence in communication have been examined in previous chapters. The focus of this study now shifts to examine how participants in inter-cultural interaction organize turn-taking. In this chapter, I shall look at Japanese conversational management, specifically the role of silence and pauses in Japanese interaction. I shall examine the form, meaning and function in interaction of silence in relation to conversational features such as overlap, interruption and back-channelling behaviour.

4.1 Turn-taking:Speaker-oriented or Listener -oriented approach

Conversation as a form of social activity involves various processes such as negotiation, solidarity, co-operation, conflict and competition. In conversing, as members of a certain community, we follow a set of social rules. One early attempt to isolate such rules was that of by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) in the analysis of naturally occurring English conversation. They reported that the following regulations were observed in interaction.

> (1) One party talks at a time. Through transitions, (from one turn to a next) the speaker changes, therefore, the other party talks at another time.
> (2) The size and ordering of each turn are not fixed but vary.
> (3) While exchanging turns, both parties employ techniques for allocating turns between them and constructing those turns.
>
> (Sacks et al. 1974: 314)

They have also introduced 'a basic set of rules governing turn construction (1974) at a 'transition relevant place (TRP)'. The following are the turn constructing rules of Sacks et al (1974) simplified by Levinson (1983), 'where C is current speaker, N is next speaker, and TRP is the

recognizable end of turn-constructual unit (Levinson 1983).'

Rule 1 applies initially at the first TRP of any turn.

(a) If C selects N in current turn, then C must stop speaking, and N must speak next, transition occurring at the first TRP after N-selection.
(b) If C does not select N, then any (other) party may self-select first speaker gaining its rights to the next turn.
(c) If C has not selected N, and no other party self-selects under option (b), then C may (but need not) continue (i.e. claim rights to a further turn-constructional unit).

Rule 2 applies at all subsequent TRPs

When Rule (c) has been applied by C, then at the next TRP rule (a)-(c) apply, and recursively at the next TRP, until speaker is effected.
(Levinson 1983: 208)

While these basic principles perhaps reflected accurately the empirical data collected by researchers in British contexts, as Murata (1994) points out, further research in alternative cultural contexts is required to assess the degree to which turn-taking principles vary across cultures. The purpose of the present study is to ascertain not only whether these principles can be applied to the Japanese context, but also to examine the role of silence in conversational management in the classroom, drawing comparisons with previous research findings based on interactional analysis in business and other settings, with a particular view to understanding how factors such as power-relationships interact to affect its use. This also involves an exploration of how TRP's are used to facilitate conversation in Japanese and Western interactional situations. In addition, both listeners' and speakers' evaluations of the turn-taking process are analysed as it could be argued that early research approaches, such as that adopted by Sacks (1974) were somewhat speaker-oriented. For example, while in Rule 1 (b), he refers to the role of the listener when turn is claimed, the listener also has an equal role as a conversation facilitator by adopting various strategies. It can be argued that the process of negotiation between the listener and the speaker does not only involve competing self selectors

projecting their starts to be at the earliest possible transition relevance place, but also involves the listener as an active and crucial participant. However, in order to understand the role of particular aspects of interaction, it is necessary to begin with a basic overview of conversational management. For Maynard, skilful management of such interaction includes:

> ..., an ability to start conversations, take turns appropriately, develop topics of conversation interactionally, perform appropriate back-channel behaviour, select what is to be said and unsaid, and send appropriate paralinguistic nonverbal signs.... (Maynard 1985: 1102)

As for approaches to conversational analysis, Burgoon (1994) classifies them into three groups. The first approach is that adopted by Jefferson (1984). According to Burgoon (1994): 'The vocalization-based approach' assigns silent periods to the person who has just stopped talking and include them in that person's turn duration. Alternatively, Sacks (1974) considers these inter-speaker pauses 'Transition-relevant places (places in the conversation where the floor could be exchanged) ' and assigns these periods of silence to neither participant. On the other hand, Duncan (1975) regards the use of silence as an essential element of conversation which conveys certain meanings and functions as a part of interaction and adopts the 'sequential production approach' which holds that the use of verbal and gestural criteria relies on a wider variety of cues to mark turn beginnings and endings and that the context of the conversation must be taken into account. For example, with regard to the turn-yielding cues provided by the speaker, he argues that facing the listener and making eye contact, using terminating gestures and providing periods of silence by not filling pauses are all examples of turn-yielding cues which convey certain meanings in interaction. As an additional example, he refers to the use of posture, silence and staring away from, the speaker as turn-denying cues by the listener.

Thus, each approach regards the use of key conversational features differently and each has both

advantages and disadvantages. Vocalization-based approaches have the advantage of operational clarity. They result in a high level of measurement reliability and precision, especially from a computer-driven measuring system for tracking turns from audiotapes. However, they are limited in that they are unable to evaluate the significance of contextual features. On the other hand, the sequential approach by Duncan (1972) takes into account the context of the conversation and adopts the use of verbal and gestural criteria for analysis.

In addition, this approach acknowledges that silences and simultaneous speech are an expected part of conversation rather than breakdowns or rule-violations . However, the use of a greater number of cues also makes such definitions more complex, and consequently more open to varying interpretations. Wilson (1984) takes a somewhat different approach based on a view of turn-taking cues as resources available for interactants to use when needed. According to Burgoon (1994), this approach incorporates elements of the previous two approaches. That is, responsibility for turn-taking is mutually shared by all participants. Whereas Sacks and Shegloff (1974) had shown that silences served as topic closings to indicate that participants were no longer interested in pursuing a given topic for discussion, Wilson's approach considers that silences also function to mark episode and position boundaries and that silences which occur at boundaries may also allow participants to relax physically and mentally before pursuing the next segment of interaction.

As Burgoon (1994)acknowledges, although it appears on the surface to be effortless and rather easy area, taking turns in conversation, is actually rather complex. Therefore, in this study, I shall adopt the more flexible approach of Wilson (1984), 'turn-taking cues as resources'.

4.2 <u>Talk and Silence</u>

> A conversation is a series of opportunities to speak and listen,
> an alternation of sound and silence.
>
> (Burgoon 1994: 399)

Each group has different assumptions about how much or how little to speak in a particular situation, and about how social relations define who should speak and when. Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz (1982: 12) claim that the cross-talk characterizes three independent levels for cross-cultural comparison.

> 1. Different cultural assumptions about the situation and appropriate behaviour and intentions within it.
> 2. Different ways of structuring information or an argument in a conversation.
> 3. Different ways of speaking: the use of a different set of unconscious linguistic conventions.
>
> (Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz 1982: 12)

According to Tannen (1984), New York Jewish speakers of English have different expectations in conversation from Californians of Christian background: about when and what to say, about how talk should be paced, and about how direct or indirect that talk should be. That is, cross-cultural interactants express involvement and considerateness in different ways. Another example is the difference in value placed on the use of silence and talk between the Japanese and the Americans. For instance, Americans use talk to sort out, solve and work through their problems; talk is a means for mutual understanding. Therefore, as Scollon (1985) points out, Americans view silence as 'an absence of communication.' On the other hand, in Japanese conversation, what counts is not what you say, but the feeling that you convey. In contrast to the American point of view, talk is not seen as accomplishing mutual understanding. In comparing the two interactional styles in business settings, Yamada (1992) identifies several features of conversational management in the business setting in both the American and the Japanese context. One finding was that Americans tended to use more and more talk to try to resolve the

conflict, and that the Japanese to use less and less talk to avoid the problem. Another interesting finding by her was that both American and Japanese participants have displayed strategies for shifting topics; however, these differed markedly.

> The American participants use a verbal formula to close grouped topics in their own round, while Japanese participants do not close their topics, but use silence to shift topics instead.
> (Yamada 1992: 77)

Another significant consideration to be taken into account in examining the turn-taking systems is the power relationships within a certain community such as junior-senior or teacher-student. Yamada (1992):

> In general, the face of a highly respectable person is to be protected at any cost. This tendency was observed in the negotiation of turn-taking order in the Japanese business group discussion in the sense that the oldest male member, who is considered the most superior, was given the last turn.
> (Yamada 1992: 85)

That is, as Yamada indicates, turn-taking order is indirectly arranged in ways which lead to juniors or inferiors taking earlier turns perhaps, because their 'face' is considered dispensable while seniors or superiors take later turns when they can express their opinions without losing face. As well as this hierarchical relationship between juniors and seniors, Cogan (1995) suggests differences in the role expectation of teachers in the class.

> The Japanese teacher is seen as authoritative, particularly with regard to subject matter taught, whereas in the West, teachers are increasingly seen as facilitators and resource persons. (Cogan 1995: 85)

Thus, in analysing the turn-taking systems in each community, it should be borne in mind that the analysis needs to acknowledge participants' mutual creative processes of negotiation. In addition, it needs to be taken into account that different cultural assumptions as to how to communicate with others directly or indirectly affect how people structure the conversation in

the given social and situational context. In the following section, I shall look at several conversational key characteristics and the use of silence in the Japanese context, not only from a linguistic point of view but also from the socio-cultural perspective, by examining its function in interaction.

4.3 Overlap and interruption

According to Sacks et al. (1974), overlaps occur when self selectors competing for a next turn (Sacks et al. 1974). Murata (1994) calls this type of overlap by simultaneous starts 'a turn-competing overlap.' In contrast, 'response-oriented' overlaps, these have two subdivisions - 'misprojection' and 'back-channel-overlap'. - which are characterized by quick response and involvement of conversational partners. With misprojection, overlap takes place without intending continuation.

A: Yeah, alright dear.
B: Okay.
(Sacks et al 1974: 708)

The second type of response oriented overlap fulfils the role of 'back-channel' (the use of interjections during conversation to signal comprehension, attention or agreement) and demonstrates the listener's involvement or listenership in the conversation, without implying any intention of changing topics or gaining the conversational floor, but simply to show one's sympathy towards the speaker as follows:

A: And since it's very difficult to plan [and every time you want
B: [Oh, terrible.
A: = to turn right you can't turn right
(Murata 1994: 177)

As Murata points out, 'overlaps' have both negative (violative) and positive (facilitative) functions for effective interaction. According to her research, the average occurrence of overlaps

in Native-Speakers of English and Japanese Speakers of English is almost the same as that in interaction among only Japanese, scoring 3.0 overlaps per minute conversation in statistics. However, she argues, the comparison would become more complex if variation of types of overlaps and the points in conversation when they arise were considered. For example, she suggests that violative interruption tends to take place before TRP's and overlap with them (Murata 1992:178). Moreover, she states that the relatively more frequent use of co-operative interruption, one of the features of the Japanese conversational style, *Aizuchi* has been observed among Japanese speakers (Murata 1992: 180). Likewise, careful analysis and deep understanding of a conversational feature are needed from the pragmatic point of view in order to understand specific conversational features in each socio-cultural context.

4.4 Repetition and silence

Another important interactional feature which characterizes the Japanese communicative style is the use of repetition. Four different functions of repetition have been identified by Murata (1992). These are: interruption-oriented, hesitation reformulation, silence-avoidance, and solidarity repetitions. She divides them into two categories on the basis of the participation pattern; self and two-party repetitions. Interruption-oriented, hesitation and reformulation repetitions fall into the category of self-repetition, while solidarity and silence-avoidance repetitions are two-party repetitions. According to her conversational analysis, the use of solidarity repetition seems to be a characteristic of Japanese interactions. I shall discuss why 'solidarity repetition' can particularly create a sense of Japaneseness by exploring the function and the nature of five different types of repetitions.

1) Interruption-oriented repetition... utilised when a participant interrupts the current speaker's turn (related to floor-taking and topic-changing interruptions).

2) Solidarity Repetition... utilised to demonstrate participants' co-operation or involvement in conversation by repeating the preceding speaker's words and phrases, showing their listenership, participation, and solidarity with the speaker, but, without adding any new information to aid the development of topic.
3) Silence-avoidance repetition... the interactants' avoidance of silence by repeating words while they are searching for a new topic, also functions to gain time before moving to a new topic.
4) Hesitation repetition... takes place at the beginning of a new topic, or most frequently, where the speaker changes topics by asking his or her partner a question. (Murata 1992: 206)

As can be seen, each type functions differently. Murata provides a specific example of solidarity repetition by the Japanese, and states that it can be seen in the use of '*ne*', generally considered to be an equivalent to a tag question in English. She explains that it shows the interactional partners' understanding of the speaker's utterance. In addition, this '*ne*' is often combined with other hesitation phenomena including pausing, in order to construct a long topic boundary. That is, the use of '*ne*' or pausing is regarded as symbols of solidarity. In the case of silence-avoidance repetition, as in solidarity repetition, the facilitative function is intended, though this time in a situation in which silence is clearly viewed negatively. Perhaps due to the possibility that a given culture views silence in between turns as implying lack of interest or co-operation. In such case, it could be expected that in order to show active participation and involvement in conversation, quick turn-taking would be expected, in order to prevent the possibility of long pauses emerging at topic boundaries and in order to show high involvement. This, I would suggest, is one of the salient characteristics in English interactional management, which stands in contrast to Japanese conversation, which appears rather closer to Murata's territorialist model:

> In order to show respect for the high involvement in conversation, interactants take turns quickly. On the other hand, in order to show respect for territoriality, conversationalists tend to use hesitation repetitions, making their statements appear less intrusive and aggressive.

> This seems to prove conversationalists' concern for the 'double blind' (Tannen1986) of human communication; they show co-operation or solidarity by the use of quick turns, while at the same time showing respect for other parties' territory by using hesitation repetition, trying not to threaten conversational partners. (Murata 1992: 208)

4.5 Pauses and Silences

Murata (1992) points to a number of differences discernible in interactions among the Native-Speakers of English, and Native-Speakers of Japanese reflecting differing notions regarding the use of silence, having examined several functions of silences in the Western and the Japanese contexts. Before highlighting these, it is necessary to explore the use of silence in the Japanese context in more detail from the socio-cultural perspective. That is, to examine how the form of silence (length or frequency of occurrence) can be interrelated with its functions or meaning by relating to several key features discussed in the previous sections to Japanese cultural values on the use of silence.

There are several studies on the use of silence in conversation. Murata (1992) made a contrastive analysis of the use of silence which occurs around a TRP by examining its length or frequency, and its function in Japanese and in English interaction. Yamada (1992), on the other hand, examined the relationship between topic change and the use of pause and measured the average pause length which takes place in topic change in interactions in a business setting. Although the social settings and the way each piece of research is carried out differ, several common features emerge. Murata (1992)'s study which involved a contrastive analysis of interactional management in a classroom environment in English and in Japanese, aimed to discover how participants from different cultural backgrounds used silence differently. She concluded that topic boundaries in Japanese interactions were marked more frequently with

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There are several studies on the use of silence in conversation. Murata (1992) made a contrastive analysis of the use of silence which occurs around a TRP by examining its length or frequency, and its function in Japanese and in English interaction. Yamada (1992), on the other hand, examined the relationship between topic change and the use of pause and measured the average pause length which takes place in topic change in interactions in a business setting. Although the social settings and the way each piece of research is carried out differ, several common features emerge. Murata (1992)'s study which involved a contrastive analysis of interactional management in a classroom environment in English and in Japanese, aimed to discover how participants from different cultural backgrounds used silence differently. She concluded that topic boundaries in Japanese interactions were marked more frequently with

> This seems to prove conversationalists' concern for the 'double blind' (Tannen1986) of human communication; they show co-operation or solidarity by the use of quick turns, while at the same time showing respect for other parties' territory by using hesitation repetition, trying not to threaten conversational partners. (Murata 1992: 208)

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the presence of pauses than those between English participants not only in the frequency of occurrence but also in the length of pauses. According to her findings, the average pause length in Japanese interaction was 1.3 seconds at topic boundaries.

On the other hand, in interaction among two native speakers of English, it was found that only one topic boundary marked by a 0.9 second pause occurred out of nine topics. Concerning the different results of this phenomena, she points out, it seems that different attitudes towards the use of pauses or silences exist in both cultures; one trying to avoid them, the other being relatively tolerant of them. Moreover, the value system difference towards the use of pauses are supported by the responses of participants in an accompanying questionnaire, in which the correspondents were asked to specify the circumstances in which they felt uneasy because of the existence of silence. As a common answer, both respondents (Native-English speaker and Native-Japanese speaker) pointed out the formality of the situation and psychological and social distance from the interlocuter (eg. the first encounter, talking on the phone). Interestingly, Japanese respondents answered that there were occasions when they felt uncomfortable with the existence of silence when they were conscious of the presence of others, especially in a group situation, and when interacting in English. This seems to indicate that group-consciousness in interaction was stronger than that of English respondents. Furthermore, Japanese respondents emphasized the importance of silence as thinking time. Typical responses of Japanese participants cited by Murata are:

- When we are talking about something serious and need a lot of thinking, it doesn't matter.
- When I am thinking what to say, the presence of silence doesn't seem to matter.
- I feel more conscious, thinking what to say.

(Murata 1992: Volume II. 51)

As for the use of silence in the business negotiation setting, Yamada (1995) reports that in general, long silences (pauses greater than 1.5 seconds) occur more frequently in the Japanese meeting than in the American equivalent: 103 instances of long pauses in the Japanese meeting as compared to only 20 cases in the American meeting. In the Japanese meeting, the average pause time for topic shifting was found to be 6.5 seconds, but in the American meeting, the average pause time to shift rounds was 3.4 seconds, and between topics, only 1.7 seconds (Yamada 1995). In analysing the function of silence in relation to topic-change, Yamada asserted that Japanese participants used silence to shift topics, while American participants used a verbal formula to close grouped topics in their own round.

Another function of silence in interaction was highlited by Burgoon (1994) who descirbed periods of silence as examples of turn-yielding cues. Thus, silence can be used for various reasons such as turn-shift for active interaction, topic-shifting, topic-ending as a strategy of refocusing participants' attention in groups, or thinking time for serious issues in the Japanese context. In addition, as the respondents of the questionnaire conducted by Murata (1992) indicated, the social and situational context including such matters as the degree of formality or distance between interactants also needs to be taken into account. With reference to this aspect, as Mulholland (1991) notes:

> Silence can have a variety of meanings:
> 1) in a close relationship, it can signal complete accord.
> 2) in a frozen encounter, it can signal a breach of some sort - for example, disapproval or distance.
>
> (Mulholland 1991: 78)

Thus, previous research indicates that the frequency of the use of silence and its length are relatively long in Japanese interaction (eg. face-to-face interaction, business negotiation) as

compared to in English. The inter-relationship between the different cultural values regarding the use of silence and its actual use in communication are also areas of particular relevance to the present study.

4.6 <u>The role of listener: listening and silence</u>

Chafe (1985) notes three types of involvement in conversation: 1) self-involvement of the speaker, 2) interpersonal involvement between speaker and listener and 3) involvement of the speaker with what is being talked about. Referring to this distinction, Tannen (1989) holds a sense of involvement in interaction to be a necessary requirement for successful communication. He explains that creating a sense of involvement is an internal, even emotional connection which individuals feel to bind them to other people as well as to places, things, activities, ideas, memories and words, emphasizing that 'conversation is a joint production.' Scollon (1982) metaphorically calls this interactional processes 'rhythmic ensemble,' indicating the participants' rhythmical involvement when constructing meaning in interaction. Brown (1977) also refers to the rhythm of speech and considers the role of pause in interaction in terms of rhythmical 'rests' . As these observers point out, the tempo or rhythm of interactional exchange and psychological involvement of the interactants will indicate how successfully the participants are communicating in the social context in which they are involved in. In this section, I shall pay attention to the role of listening in interaction and will discuss what it means. I will also look at how cultural values towards the role of the listener differ across cultures, particularly with reference to the use of the back-channelling cue *Aizuchi* in the Japanese context as an important feature in listening.

Bolton (1990) regards 'listening' as a complex psychological and communicative process.

> Listening refers to a more complex psychological procedure involving interpreting and understanding the significance of the sensory experience. In other words, I can hear what another person is saying without really listening to him.
>
> (Bolton 1990: 177)

He also suggets three clusters of listening skills: attending, following and reflecting skills and elaborates on these as follows:

Attending skills	Following skills	Reflecting skills
. A posture of involvement	. Door openers	. Paraphrasing
. Appropriate body motion	. Infrequent questions	. Reflecting feelings
. Eye contact	. Attentive silence	. Reflecting meanings
. Non-distracting environment		.Summative reflections

In reflecting on aspects of the acquisition of such listening skills, Bolton concludes:

> The effective listener learns to speak when that is appropriate, can be silent when that is a fitting response, and feels comfortable with either activity. The good listener becomes adept at verbal responses while at the same time recognizing the immense importance of silence in creative conversation.
>
> (Bolton 1990: 190)

He also emphasizes the importance of silence in listening as a following skill, suggesting that

> Learning the art of silent responsiveness is essential to good listening. Silence on the part of the listener gives the speaker time to think about what he is going to say and thus enables him to go deeper into himself. It gives a person space to experience the feeling. Silence also allows the speaker to proceed at his own pace. In the frequent silences, he can choose whether or not to continue talking and at what depth.
>
> (Bolton 1990: 188)

Such functions of silences need to be taken into account in interactional analysis. The acquisition of such listening skills, as suggested above, is part of a process of acculturation. In the Japanese context, as Yamada points out, the responsibility of communication rests with the audience, making listener interpretation not only salient, but the main mode of communication. As for the

role of silence in the listening process, two main functions are identified.

> One is that for the actual Japanese communicators, silences demand the active listening work of *sahhi* (guess work). Another strategy of listener talk, then, silent shifting not only reads meaning into the silences, but also requires active decision making in them, though this contradicts the common view that silence is a breakdown in communication.
>
> (Yamada 1997: 77)

In addition, Yamada (1997) notes, the Kanji (Chinese characters used in writing Japanese). '*Ma*'間 (meaning space or pause) is indicated by a representation of the sun (日) shining through gates (門), illustrating how implied communication can shine through silence.

<u>The importance of back-channelling:</u>
<u>Aizuchi and Japanese conversational principles</u>

As Tannen (1985) and Scollon (1983) point out, conversational interaction requires both participants' involvement. In Japanese contexts, a conversation is also thought to be created by the collective work of all participants. Normally in Japanese conversations, the listener constantly helps the speaker with 'back-channelling', called *Aizuchi* in Japanese.

<u>What are *Aizuchi?*</u>

Aizuchi are spoken affirmatives such as 'hai'(yes), 'soo' (That's right.), 'so-desu-ne' (That's right, exactly) and 'naruhodo-ne' (indeed), as well as non-verbal affirmatives like nodding. Functionally, *Aizuchi* perform the function of a sign to show that the listener is listening to the interlocutor; effectively conveying the message: ' I understand what you are saying. Go on.' Therefore, saying 'yes' used by Japanese people does not necessarily imply consent or agreement.' Maynard (1986) more specifically outlined five functions of *Aizuchi* as follows.

1) continuer
2) display of understanding of content
3) support and empathy towards the speaker

4) agreement and
5) strong emotional response.

According to Maynard (1986), the use of *Aizuchi* is considered an essential component of effective communication which is embedded in its cultural context.

> Back-channel behaviour is a part of a sign system that mediates human thinking, that extreme frequency of turn-internal listener back-channel among Japanese subject indicates that such interactional style is internalized in the cultural and social self of Japanese. (Maynard 1985: 1103)

4.7 Silence and Gesture

In this section, the importance of gesture will be discussed as one significant element in intercultural communication. The main focus of my discussion here is upon exploring the reasons why the analysis of gestures needs to be included in interactional analysis of classroom discourse. In doing so, I shall firstly examine the nature of gesture and provide working definition of 'gesture' with reference to previous literature, before moving on to such practical issues as the importance of using video when conducting such research. That is, the necessity of looking at paralinguistic elements will also be considered.

Gesture and Communication

In order to understand gesture, researchers have defined the term from different perspectives. By looking at the definitions which have been proposed, its different functions can be summarised. The use of gesture has been explored in two distinctive ways. The first defines gesture in opposition to speech (non-vocal vs vocal) (Burling 1993), while the second approach is to regard 'gesture' as a part of integrated elements of communication. For example, Burling (1993) places signs and speech together as language, in opposition to gestures, and some of the implications of such a discussion for the analysis of cross-cultural interaction. Kendon (1991),

McNeil (1992) and others further distinguish gesture from language, vocal-articulatory gestures from holistic gestures that accompany speech and symbolic from non-symbolic gestures. In contrast, Armstrong et al. (1995) argue that they are not convinced that placing gesture in opposition to speech can provide a productive framework for understanding the emergence of cognition and language. For, Kendon (1985) 'gesture' is restricted conscious or deliberate action in his study, although he admits that the boundary between what is to be regarded as deliberate, and what is to be regarded as unintentional, subconscious or unconscious cannot be sharply drawn. He claims there to be deep links among those variable classes of gesture and proposes that the only way to begin exploring the nature of gesture is by adopting a definition of gesture that allows us to link all types of functional movements. Furthermore, Gosling (1981) supports Armstrong's claim in terms of its function and states that both vocal and non-verbal communicative behaviour can be influenced very materially by exclusively non-vocal outputs from the other. He also states;

> Meaning of some kind is being transmitted, whether intentionally or not, and is being picked up by the 'speaker', who uses it.
>
> (Gosling 1981: 63)

Gosling and Armstrong also claim that, by examining the use of gesture in terms of its function, different types of gestures cannot be separated even if the particular type of gesture has a concrete meaning or message such as emblems or signs. Moreover, the matter of consciousness or unconsciousness proves problematic with regard to gesture as communication, since whether gestures are used, consciously or unconsciously, they still have the potential to convey meaning. Therefore, a working definition of gesture in this study would be equivalent to the one proposed by Armstrong (1995). That is, 'gesture' is defined as 'a functional unit, an equivalent class of co-ordinated movements that achieve some end.'

Another important issue to be raised here is the relationship between gesture and silence, as gestures can be an importnat supplemental means, which helps to emphasize a meaning or message. Also, gestures can be used independently without vocalized utterances.

The following interaction between an English teacher and a Japanese student in an EFL class provides a very basic example of the use of gesture as an alternative to words.

T: Do you have any additional idea of the life style in Spain?
S: Silence. [The student shakes her head without utterance.]
T: No? How about .....[T calls on other student.]
(Extract from classroom interaction)

Argyle (1988) describes the more complex uses of gesture as a 'gestural dance' in which:

> There is an intricate co-ordination of pausing nad looking within turns, followed by head-nods, smiles and gazes. Interactional synchrony has been called a 'gestural dance' and linked to a waltz. (Argyle 1988: 116)

In the context of such interactions, it is important to take silence and its length into consideration as a key element in the gestural dance performed in such situations, for the use of gesture and silence are deeply interrelated sequentially, and each element has an effective role in relation to the other. For the purposes of the present study, the use of gesture, cannot be placed in opposition to speech since each code ,whatever it is, is functionally equivalent as a means of conveying a given message. Thus, as Poyatos (1982) suggests:

> From a semiotic-communicative point of view, silence and stillness in social interaction act as proper signs, not necessarily as subtitles for verbal and non-verbal expressions, as two signs which signify by the very absence of sound or movement and, what needs perhaps the most research, as carriers of the activity just heard or seen, as they re-echo it, thus enlarging it and making it more conspicuous.
> (Poyatos 1982: 136)

Importance of visual communication

For Armstrong (1995), the significance of visual communication, including gesture and other paralinguistic features has roots in human evolutionary processes:

> The key to successful social life is communication, which among primates is both visual and vocal. In this regard, we note that the primary sensory adaption of primates is visual.
> (Armstrong et al. 1995: 18)

The fundamental importance of non-linguistic information is supported by Argyle et al (1970, 1971) and Cook (1995). Pennycook (1985) also points out that the paralinguistic channels are widely believed to play a more crucial role even than words in the construction of meaning in interaction. Citing an earlier study, he points out:

> Birdwhistell (1970: 58) has stated that 'probably no more than 30 to 35 percent of the social meaning of a conversation or an interaction is carried by the words. These figures appear to have gained fairly wide acceptance, as a number of authors write 65 percent of the communicative load carried by the paralinguistic channels.
> (Pennycook 1985: 261)

Within this vast area of communicative potential, gesture occupies a range of functions which vary according to situational context. Such functions need to be understood by both users and recipients if successful communication is to take place.

A further characteristic of gesture is its versatility. For example, the use of emblems as interpersonal signals can be for avoiding embarrassing speech or for more emphasis. Argyle also adds that they may be faster than speech. They are silently used for private comments and they can also be received at a greater distance. Another important characteristic is that the use of gesture can express emotions and attitudes towards others in aiming at articulating feelings

more succinctly. For these reasons, non-verbal signals may often be more effective than those in the spoken channel.

The final point to be made is that the use of gesture or non-vocal CODE is often socially or situationally required. For example, in Buddhist funerals, the attendants show their grief by putting their palms together, fingers pointing upwards, rubbing them while bowing. They are not expected to express their grief verbally. As such examples indicate, gesture, like silence is deeply embedded in culture specific practices.

Of course, as Lyons (1973) points out, there is a common core of meaning and certain universals in non-verbal communication, such as basic facial expressions or gestures such as pointing or beckoning. However, Argyle (1988) challenges this universalist approach in favour of the view that human non-verbal behaviour fundamentally differs and is modified much more by socialization (Argyle 1988). One example of cultural difference cited by Argyle (1988) is that the Japanese have a display rule that one should not show negative emotions to keep harmony in its social context, and that, as a result the smile is used as a mask, and may express reserve or embarrassment. Therefore, superficial similarities in facial expression may conceal significant differences in their function across cultures. This inevitably makes us aware that it is necessary to look at the behaviour from its cultural perspective in order to interpret its meaning appropriately.

<u>The use of gesture in the EFL context and its analysis</u>

The target interaction to be analysed in the present study is that between Japanese students and native-teachers of English who are from a different cultural background. Through a

discussion of the nature of gesture and its characteristics, the important role of gesture in communication was emphasized. Clearly therefore, in order to analyse and understand its use, an audio-tape alone would not provide sufficient retrievable data for a functional analysis of communicative behaviour. In this respect, I would concur with Gosling (1981), who asserted that:

> If visual data are unavailable, a great deal is lost: who is addressing whom, who is visibly attending to whom and at what points, and often whether someone is attempting to enter the discussion. Attitudinal information can also be carried by nonvocal means.
> (Gosling 1981: 160)

4.8 Silence and Facial expression

I have previously discussed the relationship between gestures and silence. Now, I shall more specifically examine the role of facial expression in communication. In doing so, two issues need to be discussed. First, the role of facial expression in interaction and the extent to which it conveys the 'true' emotion or feeling in relation to other aspects is significance in the interpretation of visual data. A further issue, touched upon in the previous section is the question of universality. This point will be examined in contrast to the view of the cultural relativist. Lastly, the relationship between facial expression and silence will be explored.

Facial expression and Emotion

When we communicate, we send and receive messages in various ways. We use both verbal and non-verbal channels. In the visual dimension, facial expression is used to convey a variety of intentional and unintentional signals to the other participants in order to communicate. For Ekman (1975), the visual channel is the primary system for the expression of emotion.

Of particular significance in this context is the use of facial expressions which, in common

with other forms of gesture, are an often spontaneous, quick and economical means of communication in contrast to verbal expression. In addition, the use of facial expression is intimately related to the use of the spoken channel, even though this relationship may take on different forms. In usual circumstances, facial expression supports or emphasizes a message conveyed by words. For example, facial expression may also alternate with spoken words. That is, if participants feel the use of facial expression is more important, more effective or appropriate in a particular context, they may convey their message through facial expression. For Ekman (1975), this can be explained by the fact that words are often an inadequate means of describing the feeling people have, or of responding to others' facial expressions in emotionally charged situations. In addition, there are also occasions when feelings are concealed for reasons of politeness or deception; during which the success of such acts of concealment depends upon the co-ordination of facial and verbal expression in the service of prevarication.

Ekman (1975) raised important issues on the use of facial expression in this respect, by drawing a distinction between the intention of the sender and the interpretation of the receiver. For Ekman, two questions emerge; 1) Is emotion transparently communicated through facial expression? 2) Can the emotion expressed on the face be accurately interpreted by the receiver? Ekman also suggests that the face is not just a multi-signal system (rapid, slow, static) but also a multi-message system. As described above, while there are occasions when we simply express our feelings honestly, there are also situations in which we supress or conceal them. First, we may control our impulses as a form of politeness. One example provided by Ekman is the social disapproval of staring in the United States and many other cultures. Further, people control facial expressions because of vocational need. In addition, there are social restrictions

concerning which emotions can be shown facially in a given social context. For Ekman (1975), these can be understood as an aspect of 'cultural display rules' which govern how people manage the appearance of their faces in public. If this is the case, as with other aspects of communication, the degree of cultural variation needs to be considered.

Universalism vs Cultural Relativism: Facial expression

On the issue of variability, two distinctive views can be identified. Universalists claim that basic emotions and facial expressions are largely shared across cultural boundaries, whereas cultural relativists see emotional expression as specific to a given culture.

Darwin (1873) was the first scholar to claim basic emotions to be universal. That is that all humans, regardless of culture, possess similar mechanisms that produce emotions. Subsequently, other theorists such as Izard (1968) and Tomkins (1962, 1963) supported this view. This argument was supported firstly by the fact that the universalists had compiled compelling evidence of cross-cultural, cross-generational, and cross-species consistency of expressions of the basic emotions (Ekman 1973). In addition, another source of evidence involved studies of children born blind and deaf who had been deprived of opportunities to learn or to encode expressions such as laughter or anger (Burgoon et al 1994). For Ekman and Oster, such well founded research contrasted with the more speculative approaches of cultural relativists:

> Most accounts of extreme cultural variability in the expression of emotion come from qualitative observations made by single observers who did not control for observer or sampling bias or take display rules into account.
>
> (Ekman and Oster 1982)

Ekman, Friesen and Ellsworth (1982) reiterated this attack, accusing cultural relativists of

faling to gather systematic quantitative data, relying instead on anecdotal impressions or the

descriptions of novelists.

In response, cultural relativists argue that even when emotional expressions transcend culture, the rules for emotional expression and the social functions associated with it, are determined by the cultural context. One of the strongest pieces of evidence in support of this position, is the fact that behaviour can be modified, and many actors, for example, are able to convincingly simulate. They also emphasize the importance of differences between display rules, rather than the recognition of facial expressions central to the research conducted by Universalists.

From the mid 1970's, Ekman and his colleagues (Ekman 1973, Oster and Ekman 1982) developed a third explanation 'the Neurocultural theory.' This theory assumes that while emotional expressions are innately wired in the human brain. Through experience, people learn culture-specific rules for their display. Furthermore, they specify the contexts in which facial expressions differ across cultures. Firstly, they suggest that many interpersonal elicitors, such as messages from other people, are socially learned and vary from culture to culture.

Secondly, they refer to blended facial expressions in which humans do not display pure emotional expressions but blend them to create new ones. They consider that these blends are likely to be culture-specific since an elicitor that activates a blended expression is unlikely to be present in another culture. Display rules of facial expressions are regarded as the third component of the expressive process. They state that considered to be learned procedures for managing emotional displays which include intensifying, deintensifying, neutralizing and masking emotional expressions.

Ekman and Friesen (1975) supported this view with evidence from their 1972 study into facial

responses of Japanese and American subjects while watching a stress-inducing or neutral films. They found that while subjects made similar facial expressions when alone, as predicted by knowledge of display rules in the two cultures, when a person in authority was present, the Japanese subjects smiled more and showed more controlled facial expression than did the Americans. Also, when the subjects were later interviewed about their facial reactions, Japanese subjects masked these expressions with a polite smile, whereas the Americans openly displayed their disgust and anger about the content of the films.

Yamada (1997) also refers to the Japanese smile as a distinctive non-verbal behaviour by the Japanese.

> The Japanese often smile or laugh even when a topic is not funny not because they are trying to be polite as advocated by some scholars, but because a laugh or a smile can show commiseration and empathy among communicators who need and depend on each other. Like other, Japanese strategies, smiles and laughter demonstrate the need to get along given Japanese game rules, rather than sheeer politeness.
> (Yamada 1997: 100)

These non-verbal aspects in Japanese interaction will be further discussed in chapter 8, in analysing actual interaction in EFL class. The frequent presence of the smile as a communicative strategy can be viewed as emerging from the distinctive patterns of socialisation prevalent in Japanese society. As Matsumoto and Kishimoto (1983) suggest, Japanese children are socialized from an early age to avoid the expression of intense emotions such as anger. Ting-Toomey and Gudykunst (1988) also refer to this point, relating it to particular societal forces which emphasise defined social roles which act to diminish uncertainty, and collective cultural and economic tendencies. Indirectly referring to the effects of such societal features on emotional displays, Ting-Toomey and Gudykunst conclude:

> If the high-uncertainty-avoidance culture is also collectivistic,

> the display of emotion is limited to 'positive' emotions, since the display of 'negative' emotions can decrease harmony in the group. (Ting-Toomey and Gudykunst 1988: 180)

Klopf et al. (1981 cited from Rozelle et al 1986) claimed that the Japanese subjects in their study perceived themselves to be less spontaneous (by less touching, more distance, less forward-leaning, less eye contact, and an orientation away from the other) than their Finnish and American subjects. Although their findings have been criticised due to their lack of description of the way in which people from different cultures feel when they violate a social taboo, they nevertheless reflect some aspects of Japanese behaviour.

Whatever the shortcomings of much research in this area, a consensus does appear to be emerging around the notion that while facial expressions themselves may manifest universal features, the display rules under which they operate vary according to the situational context. Ekman and Friesen (1988) summed up this position as follows:

> No one reported evidence that facial expressions interpreted as one emotion by the majority of observers in one culture were interpreted as other emotions by the majority of observers in another culture...Facial expressions are interpreted similarly across cultures, the context of facial expressions of emotion, although the Consequences of emotional expression, the judgements of emotion blends, and the extent of accuracy in judgements of emotion blends and the extent of accuracy in judgement may differ among cultures. (Ekman and Friesen 1975: 203)

In the context of Ekman and Friesen's own study, it was found that Japanese, unlike their Americans counterparts, would mask negative emotions with polite smiles in the presence of others and especially in the presence of authority.

If these observations can be accepted as valid, what then, is happening in the classroom? In the presence of the teacher, who is the authority for students, and also in the presence of other peers,

do students control their facial expression, and how might this relate to the use of silence? While they are keeping silent, are they showing their true emotions through facial expression? This issue will be fully discussed in the analysis of the questionnaires and recorded data in Chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter 5 The framework for the analysis of the use of silence in this research

In the previous chapters, I discussed how the analysis of the use of silence in communication needs to be conducted not only from a linguistic or statistical perspective, but also from a functional one. In other words, the adoption of a purely statistical analysis of the data fails to show the multiple, more complicated communicative functions of silence. Thus, engaging in activites such as recording silence length and classifying this without regard to socio-cultural or pragmatic considerations is just as likely to lead to speculation, stereotyping and overgeneralisation as relying on anecdotal evidence.

This section will discuss the aim of this research, the reasons for adopting a qualitative approach, its strengths and possible limitations. In doing so, the peculiar characteristics of classroom discourse in comparison to natural face-to-face interaction outside class will be examined. In addition, the role of questions and responses as well as the importance of contextual information will be considered in the formulation of an overall research design.

5.1 Qualitative approach for the analysis of the use of silence

Traditionally, studies of the use of silence have been carried out mainly from the linguistic perspective. The main focus of such studies was upon analysing the length of silence in communication. More recently, studies have shifted their focus somewhat, towards discovering cross-cultural variation. In this context, greater emphasis has been placed upon socio-cultural and psychological aspects of language use (Tannen 1984, Gumperz 1982, Erickson, 1982). This shift of emphasis can be attributed to the fact that the syntactic approach, which concentrates on the comparison of different language systems or the semantic approaches, which involves the study of meaning in language, both have limitations to achieving an

understanding of the use of language as a means of communication, due to the diverse nature of language use. Therefore, a comprehensive approach needs to engage with social contexts marked by such factors as different power-relationships between participants, individual shared knowledge about the event, the aim of communication and the participants' communicative style.

As Widdowson (1996) points out, it is important to discern what people mean by language and how they articulate its meaning potential as a communicative resource. This research arises from a concern for Japanese learners of English and their use of silence in the EFL context. As this study seeks to examine interaction between Japanese learners and Western teachers, it inevitably involves cross-cultural comparison relating to how people from different cultural backgrounds interpret the meanings or the uses of silence differently.

A cross-cultural and pragmatic approach is essential to explaining the causes of mutual misunderstanding related to a particular phenomenon. Thus, as well as exploring 'universal' features of the use of language, a more pragmatic and qualitative approach is also adopted. The reasons for this will be outlined in the following section.

5.2 Qualitative vs Quantitative research

> How do we understand what someone is talking about?
> (Stubbs 1983: 5)

The study of human communication starts from this fundamental but inevitable question. Traditionally, studies based on systematic classroom observation mostly rely on straightforward summary findings in numerical or tabular form. The focus in such studies is the accurate identification of a certain class of behaviours, such as overlap or interruption rather than the examination of such behaviours in context, in order to explore their significance - why they occur, when they occur, and the range of functions they may fulfil (Jefferson 1984). As Jefferson

claims, this disregard for contextual factors is problematic as people do not characteristically interpret meaning only through certain categorical features of the use of utterances. The second main problem derives from the method which the quantitative approach adopts.

Inevitably, not everything can be counted or measured adequately, and therefore, numbers cannot tell the whole story. Even if the measurement is accurate, the numbers cannot explain the actual intention or interpretation of an utterance. This problem is also central to the interpretation of silence in interaction. For example, the occurrence of silence cannot always be attributed to as hesitation according solely to its length. It could equally suggest a lack of interest or lack of concentration or thinking time. Without specific reference to contextual information, whatever the degree of accuracy of measurement, statistical information cannot fully explain the communicative act.

Having outlined the limitations of purely statistical approaches, the question inevitably arises as to how socio-pragmatic features can be analysed objectively. This problem, as Gumperz (1981) acknowledged, is of particular importance to the observer of cross-cultural or multi-cultural classroom behaviour:

> One difficulty is that the basis for analysis is the coder's interpretation of behaviour rather than behaviour itself. When interpretations of behaviour differ as they do in most ethnically mixed classrooms, there is no way to safeguard against cultural bias in evaluating performance and to distinguish between differences in cultural style and differences in ability. Without reference to the actual process of interaction, nothing can be said about how participants react to and make sense out of particular tasks. (Gumperz 1981:6)

Making a similar point, Stubbs (1976) argues that classroom talk is generally 'coded' by the observer on the spot in real time, and that therefore, the actual language used by learners and

pupils is inevitably lost. As a result, Stubbs (1974) strongly emphasizes the necessity of qualitative and ethnographic research, suggesting that:

> Studies of real, everyday behaviour are 'unscientific' because real-life settings are vastly complex and contain many uncontrollable factors. (Stubbs 1974: 76)

The diversity and complexity of human interaction, therefore, need to be taken into account as essential features of social interaction. In this sense, ethnographic and qualitative approaches provide a useful framework in which to discuss contextual phenomena; a discussion which purely 'scientific' data analysis would not allow.

However, ethnographic research has also been criticised in terms of its validity and reliability. Ellis (1997), for example, claims, it lacks the rigour required to provide a valid alternative to standard research designs which emphasise statistical tests of significance. However, Hymes (1997) considers the notion of validity differently:

> For ethnographic enquiry, validity is commonly dependent upon accurate knowledge of the meaning of behaviour and institutions to those who participate in them. The point is to stress the necessity of knowledge that comes from participation and observation, if what one thinks one knows is to be valid.
> (Hymes 1996: 1)

While the quest for accuracy appears to be the purpose of both a 'scientific' and 'qualitative' approach, one seeks this in statistics and the other in describing socio-cultural context. Even so, both have limitations, the first due to a failure to engage with context, the second relating to the nature of research itself. No matter how deeply we try to describe social interaction in a given context, we are only partly able to analyse our lives and their contexts. With regard to the analysis of socio-cultural phenomena, Hymes (1996) also suggests that the deepest meanings and patterns in a particular culture may not be talked about at all.

Thus, both qualitative and quantitative research have their own strengths and weaknesses. Generalization or universality which can gain from quantitative data depicts one aspect of language use. On the other hand, ethnographic, qualitative-oriented data conveys contextual information which is essential in the analysis of human interaction. Taking these facts into account, I shall discuss the role of the ethnographic approach in relation to discourse analysis in the EFL classroom in the next section.

The analysis of the use of silence - ethnographic approach

Now I shall consider why a non-judgemental ethnographic approach is needed in order to understand the use of silence by Japanese learners. I will also discuss what we mean by 'ethnography' by examining its role and its characteristics in the EFL context. Heath (1982) defines ethnography as the study of people's behaviour in naturally occuring, ongoing settings, with a focus on the cultural interpretation of behaviour. Elaborating Heath's definition, Watson-Gegeo (1988) specifies what is included in the study of ethnography as follows;

> The ethnographer's goal is to provide a description and an interpretive-explanatory account of what people do in a setting (such as classroom, neighborhood, or community), the outcome of their interpretations, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning interactions have for them).
> (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 576)

Having looked at such definitions, two dimensions of ethnography emerge. One is detailed description of human behaviour in a natural social context, which includes the observation and the analysis of the way interactions take place. Another important component of ethnography involves the interpretation of culture and the characteristics of members of a particular group. For Nunan (1992) and Van Lier (1988), this aspect constitutes the primary purpose of ethnography. Nunan, for example, suggests that 'Ethnography involves interpretation, analysis

and explanation - not just description (Nunan 1992; 56)', while Van Lier, in referring to the role of ethnography in classroom research notes:

> Classroom research must study not only how classrooms must or should be structured in order to promote learning in optimal ways, but also why things in classrooms happen the way they do, and in this way expose complex relationships between individual participants, in the classroom, and the social forces that influence it. (Van Lier 1988: 82)

Ethnographic study is therefore concerned with discovering not only what is taking place in a given context, but also ascertaining how and why. The example provided by Watson-Gegeo (1988) is particularly useful in explaining why such a three tier approach is necessary.

> With regard to culture and teaching, for example, we can use ethnography to study the role of the classroom teacher in relation to how that role is defined and enacted in various societies. In Japan, teaching is a prestigious and respected role, the teacher-student relationship is one of polite distance, and the burden of responsibility for learning is placed on the student rather than on the teacher (White 1987). In the United States, teachers do not enjoy such prestige or respect, and they are increasingly expected to meet more and more of their students' needs. (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 586)

In other words, for Watson-Gegeo, the ideal teacher role in one cultural context may be inappropriate in another. From a Japanese pedagogical point of view, unless American values are understood and accepted in the way Japanese teachers and learners consider it as worthy values.

The same issue arises when considering the function of silence in different cultural context. If, for example, Japanese EFL classrooms value the use of silence more as a part of learning than Western counterparts, the interpretation of students' behaviour would be different as a result of differences in societal expectations. Furthermore, an ethnographic approach is also invaluable in enabling teachers to anticipate students' needs and understand the expectations that learners

bring to the classroom concerning appropriate student role and styles of interaction. Thus, as Watson-Gegeo (1988) points out, through ethnographic study, teachers can gain insights not only into appropriate classroom interactional patterns, but also overall classroom organization and teaching and learning strategies as:

> Ethnographic research can document and analyze what it takes to establish good relationships between teachers and students in the context of particular cultural or school settings.
> (Watson-Gegeo 1988:587)

Key principles of Ethnographic research

In order to achieve such documentation, what does the researcher need to examine? For Van Lier:

> Ethnography is based on the principles require constant attention to the context of actions and to the viewpoints of the participants themselves as a group and as individuals.
> (Van Lier 1985: 16)

In order to develop a sensitivity towards such cultural and contextual aspects, two key principles are holistic or contextual, as well as emic approaches are necessary. In arguing for the former, Fetterman (1989) suggests that documenting multiple perspectives of realities in a given study is crucial to an understanding of why people think and act in the ways that they do (Fetterman 1989:31). Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) also point out the indispensable relationship between the holistic and the contextual approaches. This is because they regard the context in which any research takes place to be complex and composed of a diversity of individuals and groups motivated by various ideals and interests (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994: 253).

With regard to the classroom situation, Van Lier (1985) argues that language learning occurs in the context of social interaction, both in the classroom and outside, noting:

> A consensus of classroom learning will need to put the social context of learning in a central place, in three senses:
> a) learning as an interactive, here social activity;
> b) the classroom as a social setting;

> c) the place of the classroom as one aspect of social life.
> (Van Lier 1985:71)

Thus, the analysis of classroom behaviour from a multiple or holistic perspectives enables us to understand the diversity of human behaviour.

Another important principle of the ethnographic approach is the emic enquiry into subject matter. Such approaches have been associated with researchers such as Van Lier (1985), Le Compte (1993), and Fetterman (1989), and are often contrasted with etic points of view. Breen's definition is typical:

> The emic and etic standpoints are alternate ways of viewing the same reality. The etic standpoint is a view from outside, either random in its selectivity or with a set of presuppositions that have only a chance relationship to the scene being described. The emic standpoint is a view from within that notices just those features of the scene that are marked as significant by internal criteria.
> (Breen 1985: 3)

As Breen suggests, the insider's perspective is instrumental to an understanding of situations and behaviours. This is because, as Watson-Gegeo (1988) notes, emic approaches incorporate culturally grounded perspectives, interpretations, and categories used by members of the group under study to conceptualize and encode knowledge and to guide their own behaviour. He points out that in cases where the researcher has a different socio-cultural background from her subjects, it is difficult to understand what is happening in a particular social context without reference to the subjects' own interpretations. Such perspectives have given rise to the concept of 'voice' in the research context. This is defined by LeCompte as:

> Voice is the interpretation usually associated with the perspective of a particular individual or group. Each participant, including the researcher, comes to a project with a different set of background experiences, beliefs, and values, and each interprets what happens in a different way. This creates multiple voices and cross-cutting, often conflicting, discourses.
> (LeCompte 1993: 160)

Thus, both contextual / holistic, and emic approaches are central to ethnographic study. In the next section, I shall turn to the subject of triangulation, a further means of developing a multidimentional research approach.

Triangulation

Cohen (1994) defines triangulation as 'the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour.' The main advantage of the use of triangulation is that it can facilitate the analysis and understanding of human behaviour from a wider and broader perspectives. That is, a single method of observation proves insufficient to account for the complexity of human behaviour, and of situations in which human beings interact. However, triangulation itself raises a number of problems, for, as McCormick and James (1983) argue, researchers using the method can provide no absolute evidence that a number of data sources guarantee accurate interpretation.

However, for McCormick and James, greater credibility is conferred on findings when others, particularly, the subjects of the research, acknowledge their authenticity. This implies that respondents' own views need to be incorporated for the analysis and interpretation of actual data to succeed. This point is emphasized by many researchers (Allwright 1991, Adelman 1981, Stubbs 1976). Adelman (1981,1983), for example, states that the practice of triangulation involves an attempt to relate what people do to their own accounts of their motives.

Adelman also advocates drawing comparisons between analysts and participants' accounts.

Thus, triangulation regards participants' own interpretations of events as central to the process

of constructing valid data. The approach favoured in this study shares these objectives, and therefore, I adopt methodological triangulation as a central component. As a result, conclusions will be drawn based on the reflections of both students and teachers as well as the observation of learners' classroom behaviour, on classroom interaction, as well as on class based observation.

5.3 The characteristics of classroom discourse

In the analysis of classroom discourse, it is necessary for the researcher to understand its situational context as this relates profoundly to the interpretation of students' and teachers' classroom behaviour. One of the distinctive characteristics of classroom discourse in comparison with the discourse of natural conversation is the extent to which utterances are planned. In natural conversation, language is used spontaneously, being composed in real time in response to immediate situational demands. In this sense, conversation is dialogue conducted primarily for interactional purposes. On the other hand, in the classroom, although there may be interactive aims and the spoken material is largely unscripted, lessons are 'scripted' according to a set of routines which are appropriate to a given pedagogical context and which are expected by all the participants to be in operation for the duration of the discourse.

A further point which needs to be taken into account is the power-relationship between teachers and students as participants. In general, teachers and students alike have very definite expectations about what normal classrooms are like. This can be considered as part of a shared cultural knowledge which encompasses ideas of the relative power of discourse participants to do such things as initiate interaction. As Stubbs (1983) points out, these shared assumptions invariably place the teacher in a dominant position:

> Teachers have more power and control than pupils.

> Much classroom talk is characterized by the extent to which one speaker, the teacher has conversational control over the topic, over the relevance or correctness of what pupils say, and even over when and how much pupils may speak. (Stubbs 1983: 43)

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) similarly draw attention to the fact that, in the classroom context, teachers have the right to speak whenever they want to, while children generally contribute to the discourse only when allowed to do so.

They also note that when there is 'public' talk in the class, pupils do not normally speak to pupils unless specifically directed to do so by the teacher. In this sense, it can be said that opportunities for interaction are relatively controlled. This also raises issues of determining the discourse type of the classroom according to its context. That is, types of methods, tasks and questions are likely to vary according to the aim of the lesson, and this can be a crucial factor in predetermining the extent to which students have opportunities to interact and how. On the other hand, the teacher is expected to know the answer and students may become annoyed if a satisfactory answer is not established. In addition, after framing a response, students are often evaluated, giving rise to a degree of anxiety connected with public performance. Thus, in terms of power-relationships and the predetermined nature of interaction in a particular context, as Adelman (1981) suggests, discourse is orderly in terms of its sequential organization. Having internalised the routines of teacher-student interaction, both parties are required to perform quite specific communicative acts. For example, teachers may be expected to ask questions or elicit ideas, and students to give responses, express their opinions or simply listen. As Erickson (1982:153) has noted, in the classroom context, students are therefore expected to draw upon two sets of procedual knowledge:

> Talk among a teacher and students in lessons, talk that is not

> only intelligible but situationally appropriate and effective can be seen as the collective improvisation of meaning and social organization from moment to moment.
> (Erickson 1982: 153)

Making a similar distinction between form and content, Mehan remarks that:

> Students not only must know the content of academic subjects, they must learn the appropriate form in which to cast their academic knowledge. They must know with whom, when, and where they can speak and act, and they must provide the speech and behaviour that are appropriate for a given classroom situation. (Mehan 1979: 85)

Therefore, research procedures derive from viewing participants as constructing both a social text and an academic text. That is, as Bloome, Theodorou (1986) and Green (1988) have noted, in order to continuously signal that they are appropriately participating, students must 'read' the unfolding, co-occurring verbal messages, non-verbal actions and contextualization cues of the social and academic texts of the lesson.

The role and interpretation of silence in this context may be particularly significant, for, in Western educational contexts, as Edwards and Westgate (1994) note, silences are generally minimised and considered negatively as time-consuming or uncomfortable. Therefore:

> The silence which follows a teacher's question is usually very short indeed; if no answer is forthcoming, the question will be reformulated or a quick prompt given, and any hesitation by the pupil nominated or permitted to attempt an answer is likely to lead to the turn being swiftly re-allocated.
> (Edwards and Westgate 1994:64)

Having described this tendency in relation to silence, they advocate allowing more time to think in the class and state:

> Such [a fast] pace is not easily compatible with reflection, which is why unsanctioned hesitations have been treated as such a significant indicator of more 'open' learning, and why some classroom research has produced strong recommendations that teachers should learn to pause more often, and for longer,

before they interfere. (Edwards and Westgate 1994: 64)

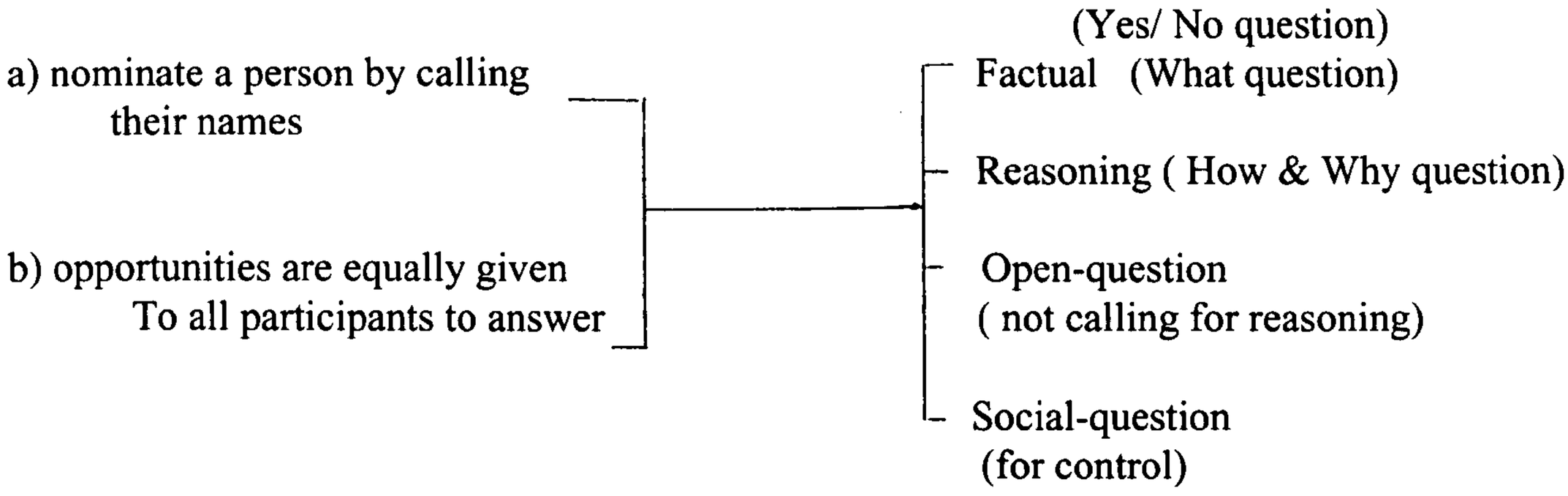
Hymes (1996) also emphasizes the same point stating that 'If one considers the possibility of an obligation to contribute what one knows and wants, the lack of a right to remain silent or to refuse commitment to a consensus - real enough issues - one has again a matter of constraint'. As Edward and Westgate point out, the use of silence in the classroom, needs to be re-examined as its function is regarded differently according to socio-cultural context. In addition, taking various manifestations of silence into consideration, it is not possible simply to attiribute long pauses or silences in teacher-student interaction to a lack of understanding or concentration, as the discussion of findings in the final chapter is intended to demonstrate.

5.4 The role of questions in the EFL context

An essential aspect which needs to be looked at in the analysis of classroom discourse is the types of questions used in interaction. Since the teacher is the initiator, or the organizer of the class, the questions asked by a teacher are central to classroom interaction. Therefore, in this section, the nature of question and answer is examined through looking at several types of questions.

The degree of influence exerted by questions is large. Therefore, as Sinclair and Brazil (1982) note, the structure of the expected response may be completely dependent on the elicitation. As well as question structure, the way in which students are asked questions is also a matter of concern. This may involve either what Sinclair and Brazil (1982) call 'nomination', in which one pupil is given the responsibility of responding, or more open-questions in which all participants may answer. The forms and types of questions used in class can be summarised as follows;

Act of questioning	Question Type



In addition, a variety of question types can be identified. The first of these is a factual question which demands a bit of information, classified by Stubbs (1976) as a 'What' type of question. For the purposes of this study, this category also includes closed-ended questions requiring 'yes / no' responses. The second type of question requires for reasoning. This may be based upon observation, recollection from memory or reaction to on answer already given. As far as an 'open-questions' are concerned, they demand reasoning.

The final question type, the social question functions either to control the class or appeal to students to share in some experience. Having looked at several question types, it is clear that the choice of questions used to elicit a partner's or students' ideas is extremely influential on the form and content of responses. This is one of the factors which needs to be taken into account in the analysis of interaction between teachers and students in terms of its sequential appropriateness in context.This appropriateness needs to be examined according to the requirements of questions.

In addition, as Sinclair and Brazil (1982) point out, responses are also forward-looking and the choices that are made in a response have a considerable effect on what follows them. This sort of requirement directly or indirectly influences the degree of difficulty experienced when answering. Additionally, another possible source of difficulty for students is the familiarity of

the topic or the content of questions.

Responses to questions may equally take different forms. For Barker (1983) these can be classified along a continuum from positive to negative feedback, in which:

> Negative feedback means a complete lack of response or a response which indicates that the message is not understood or even received. The response indicates that the originator's message is not correctly decoded and interpreted. Therefore, it does not imply disagreement, just a demonstrated lack of understanding ambiguous feedback is that which may be interpreted as either positive or negative feedback by the the originator. A blank expression on the responder's face is an example of ambiguous feedback.
>
> (Barker 1983: 31)

In a more interpretative study, Pomerantz (1982) identify a variety reasons for student difficulty in answering questions. Possible difficulties can be summarised as follows;

> 1) Inability to answer questions asked in a normal classroom
> a) Difficulty in listening
> b) Difficulty in understanding because of unfamiliar terms
> 2) Inability because of uncertainty over how to phrase and time answers
> But not because of lack knowledge
> 3) Inability to deliver a complete message even if it is planned and organized. (anxiety or unwillingness to communicate.)
> 4) Lack of concentration, distraction, disinterest, ignorance and hostility.

Understanding these sources of difficulty is necessary when the use of silence in the classroom is analysed in terms of its function. The relationship between these elements and the use of silence will be more throughly discussed in the analysis of data. In addition, possible solutions for overcoming these difficulties will be explored.

5.5 The description of the classroom context as shared cultural knowledge

Green et al. (1988) suggest the following questions should be considered when conducting classroom research:

> 1. What is required of students to participate in socially appropriate ways?
> 2. Who can talk, about what, with whom, for what purpose, in what ways, under what conditions?
> 3. How does the teacher signal to students the social and academic requirements of a lesson?
> 4. What do the actions of students indicate about their understanding of task, content, and social requirements?
>
> (Green et al. 1988: 25)

In order to understand what is going on in a class and to interpret the meanings of utterances exchanged, an understanding of the contextual background is necessary. This point has been emphasized by a number of scholars. For example, Bloome (1986) suggests that the way in which classroom tasks are interpreted depends on the social and communicative context created, and adds that the comprehension of utterances depends on the degree to which student and teachers share background knowledge of the communicative context. In other words, it could be argued that no interaction can be interpreted without reference to its context.

Also, each participant's shared knowledge (culturally and socially fostered previous knowledge of the world) is a central aspect of understanding such contextual features. Barker (1983) also considers educational values to be an aspect of cultural knowledge which affects perception of the communicative setting, while Gumperz (1982) emphasizes the crucial role of social context in developing pedagogical practice in the following terms:

> The process of transmission of knowledge, the form that knowledge takes, and access to it, is both socially defined and socially constrained. We cannot assume therefore that the problem of cultural validity in the classroom can be solved by changes in language code or discourse style or even strategies if these are taken as single factors to be manipulated out of context. (Gumperz 1982: 19)

Given the inevitable rooting of educational practices in particular cultural contexts, Wilcox

(1982) argues that the grounding of cultural knowledge in a specific social environment is

necessary in order to free ourselves from cultural biases of our own. Otherwise, he argues, participants and researchers may fail to attach proper significance to their observations. Here, it is important to discuss more specifically the extent to which different classroom participation patterns can be explained by cultural norms. Allwright (1991) suggests that one thing for teachers to keep in mind is the fact that pupils' learning strategies may not always parallel teachers' teaching strategies. He warns against the dangerous oversimplification that verbal interaction in the classroom can be considered a case of 'the more the merrier.' Sato (1982), in an analysis of Asian students interactional patterns in the EFL class, identified three particular differences between their behaviour and that displayed by Western counterparts, namely that:

> 1. Asian learners did indeed take fewer turns than others.
> 2. Asians took fewer self-selected turns and teachers allocated fewer turns to them.
> 3. Asians had different 'bidding' patterns when compared with the non-Asians.
>
> (Sato 1982: 13)

In the case of bidding patterns, Sato observed that Asian students made greater use of this strategy than other learners before speaking - signalling an intention to speak before 38 percent of their speaking turns, while non-Asian learners apparently felt freer simply to speak out, with bidding occurring before only 18 percent of their speech patterns (Sato 1982). These findings indicate on manifestation of cultural difference in classroom interaction. This pattern derives from the learners' notions regarding the ideal interaction pattern in class; notions which clearly need to be understood by cultural outsiders, if they are not to misinterpret student responses.

In addition to this, Allwright (1991) stresses that the learners' psychological pressure or anxiety which may also be related to cultural factors, need to be understood. In other words, as learning someone else's language entails acquiring a way of looking at things from a different angle,

getting a new world view, it is potentially more stressful than performing in other subject areas.

In Japanese contexts. Allwright refers to a further inhibiting factor:

> Ironically, some learners get anxious because they know they could avoid making the most of the mistakes other people are making, but, if they do so, they also know that they will stand out from the crowd and perhaps be actively resented for their relative success, 'fear of success.'
>
> (Allwright 1991: 75)

This psychological fear is a common feature in class. However, in Japan the tendency towards anxiety is very strong, intensified by forms of cultural control epitomised by such maxims as '*Deru kugi wa utareru'*. (The nail that sticks up gets pounded down.). Therefore, in situations such as that described above, students may deliberately make avoidable mistakes or simply remain silent. Occasionally, native- like pronunciation of English may even be criticized by classmates as a sign of arrogance or of unacceptable individualism. Targetted students subsequently may resolve the issue by withdrawing from class. Volunteering answers equally entails the new risk the student will be branded as somewhat different or an outsider.

Such phenomena, as Mohatt and Erickson (1981) observed in the case of native American students, may also persist even after the death of the first language. Therefore, if teachers are to develop greater sensitivity towards such culturally grounded classroom behaviour, a range of approaches to classroom discourse needs to be employed. In this respect, it is useful to keep in mind Green and Harkers (1982) general remarks concerning the importance of engaging with a variety of contextual features:

> The key to determining both message and context is contextualization clues. These cues (verbal, non-verbal, and prosodic features of conversation) are the 'means' by which speakers signal and listeners interpret how semantic content is to be understood and how each sentence (behaviour) relates to what precedes or follows. The products of conversational processes, therefore, are a series of

> constructed meanings, semantically and socially related to the definition of context. (Green and Harker 1982: 190)

This clearly demonstrates an indispensable relationship between context and the means of conveying meaning. This also explains why both verbal and non-verbal cues need to be included in the analysis of classroom interaction.

Chapter 6 Research Design

6.1 Overall Research Design

In this Chapter, firstly I shall present the overall research design of this study, in the empirical studies of this research, the questionnaires, the 'scribble sheet' filled in by students after the class, and video-recorded data of the EFL classroom interactions.

The Questionnaires

The purpose of introducing questionnaires in this research is two-fold. The first aim is to elicit the participants' (both Japanese learners of English and English teachers) interpretations of the use of silence in the EFL class as one source of data. In the case of the Japanese students, their own interpretation of the types of difficulties they characteristically experience in the EFL class, the use of non-verbal communication when they have difficulties in expressing themselves are considered of particular importance. In addition, information regarding student notions concerning the role of teachers in easing student anxiety in the language classroom was also sought. The questionnaire was also intended to provide information on how perceptions of silence may differ between teachers and students. All questions to Japanese students were in Japanese and were answered in Japanese.

A further intention is to check learners' and teachers' pragmatic knowledge of the use of silence in interaction in Japanese and in English, in order to discover the extent to which both participants are aware of varying uses of silence across different socio-cultural contexts, and view this as a barrier to effective communication. The purpose of this is to attempt to establish some possible areas for the development of deeper mutual understanding. As control groups, Japanese teachers of English and learners of Japanese were also asked to answer the questionnaires. In this study, the participants' own opinions or interpretations are therefore considered a primary source

of data as well as classroom observation.

Recorded Data of the EFL classroom discourse and the use of the scribble sheet

Another characteristic of the empirical data, which constitutes a major feature of this research, is the inclusion of video-recordings of classroom interactions between both Japanese learners of English and a native-speaker teachers of English and learners of Japanese and a native-speaker teacher of Japanese (myself), recorded for comparison. The main purpose of introducing recorded interactional data is to observe the use of silence by Japanese learners of English and their non-verbal behaviour in ongoing classroom interactions.

As for learners of Japanese, their classroom behaviour, their way of taking turns and their use of silence were also observed and analysed. Special attention is paid to the way in which the students utilise various types of silences according to their learning style. Attention is also focused on the way in which teachers deal with the use of silence by students and how misunderstandings may arise. There is also a pedagogical point to be made. The outcome of this enquiry itself is intended to provide implications for pedagogy. Firstly, it is hoped that both the questionnaires and the recorded data may be used to raise awareness of learners and teachers to the issue of silence. In addition, by looking at the common or different interpretation of silences by both sides, possible sources of misunderstanding will be highlighted. Thus, the purpose of the enquiry itself is to explore approaches to the development of cultural understanding.

The use of 'a scribble sheet' at the end of each class is to elicit immediate responses from students on the types of difficulties they have had in the class and the strategies that they used to solve them. This sheet was introduced to ask students how frequently they remained silent and how often they had difficulties in expressing themselves in class. Three different situations were

provided to make it easier for them to reflect on their learning process. In addition, students were also asked about their expectations of teachers in terms of facilitating communication.

6.1 The Method of Data Collection

In the previous chapters, I discussed the theoretical issues underpinning this research and have examined appropriate approaches for the analysis of the use of silence in the EFL context. In this section, I shall discuss the design of the empirical qualitative research. The main concern of this chapter is to evaluate possible appropriate methods which may enable us to understand various uses of silences in the EFL classes by examining their significance in a particular context. This is attempted by involving Japanese learners of English and British students of Japanese.

6.2 Questionnaire Design

This section will start with the purpose of the questionnaire and move on to a discussion of its organization. Next, its administration will be described. Finally, the shortcomings of the questionnaires findings, such as limitations for collecting and analysing the data gathered will be discussed.

The purpose of the questionnaire

The purpose of a questionnaire in this research is two-fold. The first is directly related to the findings of the research itself; the enquiry of the use of silence by the Japanese and the Westerner (British). Another main aim is to propose a possible directions for better mutual understanding between learner's and teacher's of differences or similarities in the use of silence and also show some pedagogical implications by analysing the data gathered from both teacher and student perspectives. Regarding the first aim: Japanese learners of English and English teachers (both

Japanese English teachers and Native-English teachers) were asked to complete the questionnaires simply in order to identify the difficulties they experienced because of the presence of silence in the classroom.

The questionnaire was also intended to discover the extent to which teachers' interpretations differed from the actual intentions of students who were silent. Secondly, a possible pedagogical approach to solving the problem of misunderstanding will be proposed emerging from the data gathered.

The Subjects

Participation in the research was voluntary. The target Japanese learners of English were at an intermediate level learning English at Japanese Colleges and Universities. They were asked to answer all the questions in Japanese so that they could express their opinions fully. The target group of teachers consisted of those who had been teaching English to Japanese students for over a year, and were from a Western cultural background (42 Native English teachers). Although the nationality of teachers was slightly more variable than I expected, they could all broadly be described either as Western or East Asian in cultural orientation. As control groups, 40 Japanese English teachers were also invited to complete the questionnaire. In addition, 54 English learners of Japanese and teachers of Japanese were asked to answer the questionnaires.This was intended to explore whether there were any difference in interpretation of the use of silence between Japanese and non-Japanese teachers of English. This was also intended to reveal possible differences in the interpretation of silence across the two cultures.

The Organization of the Questionnaire

Both learners' and teachers' questionnaires consisted of three parts. Part I of both questionnaires

sought general personal background information on previous learning and teaching experience. The learners' version consisted of an inquiry into the students' level of language proficiency, in the form of self-evaluation, while the teachers'version enquired about the teachers' own experience of learning Japanese and their proficiency level as a reference.

Part II of both questionnaires dealt with the use of silence by Japanese learners of English in the EFL context. For students, their difficulties in expressing themselves and their intentions in using silence was explored. In addition, the types of strategies used to avoid difficult moments and feelings of discomfort were elicited. This focused on examining both verbal and non-verbal aspects of interaction between learners and teachers. For teachers, their interpretation of the use of silence by learners and their perception of Japanese learners and their pedagogical approaches was considered. Most of the questions were open-ended questions since the questionnaires were intended to discover respondents' intentions and interpretations of the functions of silence.

However, closed questions were also used to enquire about learners' non-verbal and verbal behaviour while remaining silent, due to the difficulty characteristically experienced by individuals in examining their own deep rooted motives in such cases.

Part III was intended to develop an understanding of both Japanese students' and English teachers' beliefs about, and attitudes towards various aspects of language use in Japanese and in English conversation. A particular emphasis was placed upon the use of silence in different socio-cultural contexts (Japanese vs Western). However, general attitudes towards communicative style in the two languages were also investigated.

<u>Part I</u>

Part I of both students' and teachers' questionnaires asked for background information on learning and teaching respectively. Students' questionnaires also included questions on their learning experiences (Questions 5-7), the amount of exposure to English through face-to-face conversation and media (Question 8-9) and self-evaluation of proficiency levels in four skills. Information obtained here was intended to assist an interpretation of the findings. Part I of the teachers' questionnaire, it was also intended to elicit background information on overall teaching experience and specific experience of teaching English to Japanese students. Their professional background as ELT teachers, their experience of staying abroad and their proficiency level in Japanese also included for reference.

There is no direct relationship between the questions asked in Part I and this research in terms of the findings. However, such information is important to know both learners' and teachers' backgrounds as significant contextual information.

Part II

Part II is directly related to the enquiry into the use of silence in EFL classrooms, and is the most important part of the research. Through a cross-examination of the interpretation of the use of silence by learners in particular, it is hoped that any similarities, and differences will be disclosed. Further investigation to find out how such differences influence communication between students and teachers will be conducted. Although the enquiry about the use and meaning of silence is the main concern for Part II, learners and teachers were asked to relate the questions to their own learning and teaching experiences. The purpose behind each question is discussed below.

The students' questionnaire: Rationale for questions

Question 1: What are the difficulties when you communicate with your teacher and with your classmates in English during the lesson?

Quesntion 2: During the English lesson, do you feel that you want more time to think before responding to teachers or your classmates?

Question 3: Are there any times when you can think of something to say but you do not raise your hand or say anything?

As far as students' questionnaires are concerned, the first three questions were designed in order to investigate difficulties in communication in the target language. Question 1 enquires into difficulties students generally have in cross-cultural interaction. Question 2 is intended to investigate how often students feel that they need more time to think before responding. Their general impression was sought through a multiple choice question. The reason for the choice is also asked in the closed form. However, they were also welcome to express other comments freely. This question indirectly relates to the use of silence as thinking time before responding. It is often noted that, in Japanese interaction, learners tend to take more time between turns as thinking time and also allow to work in pairs. To sum up, through this enquiry, students were asked whether they put value on thinking time when communicating in English, as well as when communicating in Japanese. Question 3 inquires into whether there are any occasions when students respond to difficulties in expressing themselves by keeping silent. The frequency with which the difficulties occur were asked in a closed form question. The reason for being silent was asked as a form of the open question.

Question 4: If you do not understand your teacher's question or how to do the activity given, what would you do?

Question 5: If you need more time to think before responding, what would you do?

Question 6: You think you know the answer but do not have enough confidence to say it in front of the class, what would you do?

Questions 4-6 are related to the previous question, question 3. However, each question gives more specific situations when learners might have difficulties in expressing their opinions. All three questions ask respondents to imagine their verbal and non-verbal behaviour in a situation when they might have difficulties in expressing themselves and might choose to remain silent.

The choice of these questions derives from the assumption by Nakamura (1995) that Japanese students seem to experience the three different kinds of difficulties identified by Nakamura.

Student's non-verbal action observed	Interpretation of category of meaning	Potential response by teacher
1) Looks away Touches face Looks directly at teacher	*Wakaranai:* doesn't understand question, know answer or how to produce language in English	Language support- repeat or paraphrase the question. Explain difficult words.
2) Touches hair or head Plays with hands Touches face	*Agaru:* Tension increases, feels shy, nervous, embarrassed	Emotional support- Give encouraging words and stay calm
3) Looks away Looks up, Looks down	*Kangaechu:* thinking about question, answer, what to do	Time support- Wait a little longer before taking action

(Nakamura 1995: 137)

The intended context of question 4 is a situation when students have difficulties understanding what teachers say, (because of poor listening skills or unfamiliar words) or interpreting what to do, such as the aims of the tasks or the means of achieving it. Question 5 asks learners how they would react verbally and non- verbally when they require more time to think. Question 6 asks them how they behave when they are not confident enough to express their ideas.

Question 7: When you have difficulties expressing yourself in spoken English, what do you expect your teacher to do for you?

Question 8: What would you like teachers to understand about your culture or your culture's way of communicating?

Question 7 inquires into the possible solutions which would make students feel much more comfortable or more confident in expressing themselves and into the types of support which they need in order to express themselves more freely. Question 8 was constructed to inquire explicitly into the aspects of Japanese culture or communicative style which learners want Native-English teachers to understand in cross-cultural communication.

<u>The Teachers' Questionnaire: Rationale for quesitons</u>

As far as part II of the teachers' questionnaire is concerned, this part directly inquires teachers into their interpretations of silence used by Japanese students in EFL class and also teachers' approach towards students when they remain silent. However, questions start with more general enquiries about teaching English to Japanese students. Those general questions function as a warmer to answer rather sensible questions about the use of silence.

Question 1: Which aspects do you enjoy most in teaching English (Japanese) to Japanese (English) students?

Question 2: What types of activities do your students enjoy?

Questions 1 and 2 ask how teachers see Japanese learners of English and Western learners of Japanese in general. The first question asks about the aspects which teachers enjoy most in teaching English to Japanese learners. Question 2 asks what teachers think are the types of activities that students enjoy.

Question 3: What was your first impressions in teaching English (Japanese) to Japanese (English) students?

Question 4: What is the most challenging thing for you in teaching English (Japanese)

to Japanese (English) students?

Question 5: Do you feel that Japanese (English) students are rather shy or quiet?

Question 6: Do you feel uncomfortable if your Japanese (English) students do not answer your quesions immediately?

Question 7: If your students keep silent, how do you interpret their use and meaning of silence? And what do you do?

Questions 3-7 are directly related to the theme of this research. Question 3 is intended to elicit teachers' impressions when they encounter students from different cultural backgrounds, while Question 4 attempts to inquire into the types of difficulties experienced by teachers, and whether they are related to the existence of silence by students. Question 5 was intended to inquire into teachers' perceptions about Japanese learners of English, while Question 6 inquires into whether teachers feel uncomfortable or not as a result of the existence of silence. Finally, Question 7 inquires explicitly into the interpretation of such periods of silence.

Question 8: When you teach English (Japanese) to Japanese (English) students do you take extra care to take cultural differences into account?

Question 9: If a friend was planning to teach English (Japanese) to Japanese (English) students and asked you what the key points in teaching English to Japanese (English) students are, which key points would you tell him or her?

Question 8 and 9 were intended to reveal the key points which teachers take into account in teaching English to Japanese students, and vice versa.

Part III

In comparison with Part I and II, the questions in Part III were mostly the same for all sets of respondents, with the exception of question 7 of the teachers' questionnaire, which asked for the respondents' suggestions for living in Japan. This question was designed to disclose

how non-Japanese people approach cultural life in Japan. The questions cover a wide area of language use. However, the special focus is upon the use of silence in conversation. Both negative and positive aspects of silences are covered in both English and in Japanese contexts. This section also looks at the use of silence outside the class, and is intended to reveal the extent to which the use of silence is socio-culturally valued in or outside the educational settings in which this research is conducted.

Common Questionnaire for teachers and students: rationale for questions

Question 1: When you communicate with people, which points do you care about in conversation?

Question 1 is intended to investigate how respondents place greater value upon some points than others in different socio-cultural settings.

Question 2: During conversations in your native language, do you nod frequently? How do you interpret the role and the use of nodding?

Question 2 asks about the use of back-channelling during the conversation. Many researchers (Mizutani 1982, Maynard 1983) have pointed out that the use of nodding by the Japanese is culturally specific in terms of its rhythmicity, frequency and multiple functionality. This question intends not only to re-examine the characteristics of back-channelling both in Japanese and in English, but also attempts to reveal whether there is any correlation between the use of silence and the use of back-channelling.

Question 3: Even if you have something to say, do you miss the chance to talk during the conversation?

Question 3 of the teachers' questionnaire inquires into the frequency of the times when respondents miss the chance to talk during the conversation. The aim is to investigate whether

they have difficulties in claiming a turn in either EFL or JFL settings.

Question 4: Do you feel uncomfortable if there is a period of silence during the conversation? If so, specify the situation. And is there any occasion when you appreciate the existence of silence?

Question 4 of the teachers' questionnaire is the same item as question 5 of the students' version, and is intended to provide general infromation on attitudes towards silence both in the classroom and outside.

Question 5: When do you keep silent in conversation? Specify the situation in communicating in English and in Japanese.

Question 5 of the teachers' questionnaire is the same as question 3 of the students' questionnaire, and attempts to establish particular settings in which respondents themselves are aware of their own silences.

Question 6: When is it polite and impolite to be silent in conversation?

Question 6 of the teachers' questionnaire is equivalent to question 4 of the students' questionnaire and seeks to disclose how silence is viewed as a function of politeness in different cultural contexts. The last question, question 8 for teachers is designed to elicit how teachers perceive Japanese culture in general. They are invited to supply three tips for compatriates intending to live in Japan.

<u>Administration of the Questionnaires</u>

<u>The subjects of the questionnaires</u>

As this study is designed to examine the intentions and interpretations of the use of silence in the EFL context, two different types of questionnaires were administered: one aimed at Japanese learners of English studying in English in Japan (Monolingual EFL context) and the other at

English teachers who are currently teaching English to Japanese students in Japan.

1- A): Japanese learners of English

The learners' questionnaire was administered to 189 Japanese students of English, who were undergraduate students and taking an English conversation class at each school as a credit of their course in Japan. Their age ranged from 18 to mid twenties but most of them were in their early twenties. Nearly 80 percent of them had been studying English or English and American literature as their major subjects. The rest had been majoring in a range of different subjects such as economics and technology. The learners selected were at the intermediate level, firstly because the questions on the use of silence were relatively difficult to answer as the use of silence is often a behaviour at a sub-conscious level. Therefore, the subjects were required to be able to reflect upon their own behaviour consciously and objectively to answer the questions. In addition, learners who answered the questionnaire were also observed by the researcher in order to select an appropriate group for the purpose of this research. Prior to this observation, more elementary and advanced level students were observed in order to select target learners for this research. From this observation, it was established that advanced students were rarely silent as they seemed to have adopted the communicative style of the target language (relatively spontaneous and quick turn-exchanges were observed). As for elementary level students, the amount of interaction itself between students and Native-English teachers was relatively limited, and learners' difficulties seemed to derive from mainly linguistic problems. Thus, the essential criteria for selecting the subjects were ; 1) intermediate students who are taking an English conversation class at undergraduate level and 2) those who are taught by native English teachers.

The questionnaire was administered two months after respondents had started their new

academic year. This was because it was assumed that two months in an EFL class with a new native English teacher would provide a long enough period for learners and teachers to become aware of differences or similarities between English and Japanese conversational style as a result of success or breakdowns of communication in class. For half of the subjects, the questionnaire was administered during the lesson, using the last 20 minutes. The aim of the questionnaire and instructions on how to fill it were given by the researcher in Japanese. The respondents were also free to ask any questions about the questionnaire while completing it, though this was rarely necessary. However, as most questions were open-ended or required reflection, more time was required, so respondents were allowed to take the questionnaire back home.

1-B): Native English teachers

As well as Japanese learners of English, the questionnaire was administered to 42 Native English teachers who had taught English to Japanese students either in monolingual or in multilingual EFL contexts. These respondents included the Native English teachers who were observed in class by the researcher. In addition, as a range of perspectives on this research topic was required, teachers' with varied experience in terms of the types of institutions, teaching situations and length of teaching experience were selected. While most teachers are currently teaching undergraduate students at colleges in Japan, several teachers used to teach English at secondary level under the JET programme and some are working at language schools. The aim and the procedure for filling in the questionnaire were both directly explained and in a cover letter. The respondents were given the questionnaire by my previous colleagues, and were asked to complete it in their own time.

1-C): Additional Administration of the Questionnaire to Japanese teachers of English

As well as native English teachers, the same questionnaire was administered to 40 Japanese teachers of English. This was intended to investigate whether Japanese and non-Japanese English teachers perceive the use of silence by Japanese learners differently, and if so to determine the nature of such differences. Japanese English teachers' teaching experience also varied in terms of the teaching situation and overall teaching experience. However, with only a solitary exception, none of them had taught English in multilingual contexts, rendering comparison with other learning cultures more difficult. The procedure for filling in the questionnaire was the same as that employed with native teachers of English.

2-A): Learners of Japanese

The learners' questionnaire was also administered to 54 intermediate level learners of Japanese, who were learning Japanese as a foreign language in London. Twenty-four of these were undergraduate students, while the rest were learning Japanese at language schools. Their age ranged from early twenties to mid- thirties. Nearly half of them have been to Japan and lived there for a while, the length of stay ranging from one to three years. Again, the questionnaire was administered two months after the students had started learning Japanese with the teacher. Because of time constraints, the respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire at home and return it to the class teacher.

2-B): Teachers' of Japanese

The questionnaire was also administered to 36 Japanese teachers who have taught Japanese to English students in England. They were teaching Japanese in higher education. The aim and procedure for filling in the questionnaire were once again explained in a cover letter.

Problems with the Design of the Questionnaire

Three principal problems emerged concerning the design of questionnaire:

measurement of attitudinal question type and statements.

Closed or Open-ended Questions

One of the most important issues in formulating the questionnaire related to whether questions should be of the 'closed' or 'open-ended' kind. Each of these has both advantages and drawbacks. One obvious advantage of closed questions is that, as a result of the relative speed at which subjects are able to respond, more specific information can be gathered more quickly. In addition, for researchers, closed ended questions offer a relatively simple and straightforward way of analysing results. As Oppenheim (1983) points out, this type of questionnaire is therefore useful for testing specific hypotheses, and is also useful for making group comparisons. Because of this, Kerlinger (1979) also observes that closed-questions can achieve 'greater uniformity of measurement and thus greater reliability (1971:442). However, a number of problems are also associated with the exclusive use of this approach. Among those, perhaps the most significant is the danger of creating bias in answer categories, which might eliminate valuable responses from individuals. That is, as Murata (1994) and Kerlinger (1971) note, subjects may be driven into 'forced responses,' in which, as Murata explain:

> [e]ven when the respondents cannot find a suitable alternative, they might be forced to choose one, or they might choose a response, either consciously or subconsciously, which is suitable from the researcher's point of view or in terms of 'social desirability,' but not according to their own feelings, attitudes, or knowledge.
> (Murata 1994: 217)

As for the advantage of 'open-ended' questions, this type of question offers the respondent the opportunity of freedom and spontaneity of expression (Oppenheim 1983, Moser and Kalton 1971). They are also useful for testing hypotheses about ideas or perceptions. However, open-ended questions also have disadvantages, the most obvious being that they are time-consuming

for researchers to analyse, and for respondents to answer. In addition, they also demand more mental effort from respondents. A further problem identified by Murata (1994), relates to the fact that responses may not address the specific point which the researcher intended to focus upon, as answers are relatively free of constraints. In addition, there is also the possibility that respondents may be reluctant to answer questions in sufficient depth unless they are interested in the topic and are willing to answer. In the present research, questionnaires were formulated to contain a mixture of both 'open-ended' and 'closed' questions. Part I of both questionnaires was straightforward, asking for factual personal learning and teaching backgrounds and required little time to answer. Thus, most of the questions were 'closed items' except those relating to the professional backgrounds of teachers. Part II of the students' questionnaires utilises a mixture of both 'closed' and 'open-ended' items. For questions concerning non-verbal behaviour, in which students have difficulties in expressing themselves, 'closed items' were utilized. This was because it was thought to be too demanding for respondents to reflect freely upon their non-verbal behaviour as this would require a description of largely unconscious behaviour. Therefore, categories were established from classroom observation of, with respondents invited to add comments to supplement their answers to those items. The rest of Part II of the students questionnaire, all the questions for teachers, and questions of Part III consist mostly of 'open-ended' questions. This is because the use of 'closed-questions' for the enquiry of their interpretation of silence and their attitudes towards communicative style of their own are considered inappropriate. This limit stems from expressing their ideas, although it was anticipated that it is time-consuming for analysis. The first priority was given to eliciting their actual feelings, ideas and attitudes. Also, this matches the aim and the nature of this research which is a qualitative study and regards participants' voices as the main source of data.

The limitations of the questionnaire in eliciting and interpreting respondents' attitudinal statements

In addition to some restrictions with formatting the questionnaire, it is necessary to mention several practical limitations in eliciting and interpreting respondents' attitudinal statements. This derives from the nature of enquiry made by some questions which are included in Part II and III of the learners' questionnaire.

The first limitation is in eliciting both learners' and teachers' attitudes towards their communicative style in both English and in Japanese settings. This emerged from Part III of the questionnaire. With regards to students, it was assumed that their answers might somehow be influenced by their proficiency level of English. In other words, for those with low language proficiency, their actual communicative style in the target language is possibly affected by their language level. Thus, it is possible that their actual behaviour differs from the reported communicative style in the questionnaire. For example, some questions in Part III ask learners how they perceive the use of silence both in Japanese and in English contexts. Since their language level is not highly proficient and they lack experience in communicating with native English speakers in their daily life, or they might feel that their language skills have not reached a level to be able to answer these questions. On the other hand, this sort of question can also measure their awareness of cultural differences. It would provide some pedagogical implications for how they might best be helped to become successful interactants. Taking these points into consideration, their responses will be carefully examined. In order to elicit learners' own opinions freely, they were questioned in Japanese.

The second limitation is in measuring both students and teachers' attitudinal statements on the

use of silence. Oppenheim (1984) states the nature of an attitude as follows:

> An attitude statement is a single sentence that expresses a point of view, a belief, a preference, a judgement, an emotional feeling, a position for or against something. Attitudes are reinforced by beliefs (the cognitive component) and often attract strong feelings (the emotional component) which may lead to particular behavioural items (the action tendency component). (Oppenheim 1984: 174-75)

Thus, as it is described by Oppenheim, attitudes consist of various dimensions of individual perceptions according to their previous experiences. Also, no one can perfectly describe their attitude as a form of statement within the time constraints. Thus, because of the nature of attitude itself, the self-reported attitudes expressed in the written form have some limitations in conveying their real attitude objectively. Taking those limitations into account, I shall return to discuss them in the analysis of actual data later.

6.3 Major Data Collection

This study looked at the use of silence by Japanese learners' of English who were taught by native English teachers in monolingual EFL contexts in Japan. Major data collection was carried out to investigate how learners use silence as their response or as a learning strategy. Therefore, examining the intentions behind learners' use of silence and the interpretations of silence by the teachers were the main focus of this analysis. The intention was also to find out whether there was any large or subtle gap and differences in interpreting the meaning of silence between those from different cultural backgrounds. If there are differences, detailed analysis of the data for better mutual understanding was intended.

The subjects

Japanese learners of English

The subjects were Japanese college students in Nagasaki prefecture who were taught by Native English teachers in a monolingual EFL setting in Japan. Their ages ranged from 18 to early twenties. The selection of subjects was made after several video-recorded observations by the researcher on the basis of the relatively frequent and prolonged use of silence in class. After the observation, it was decided to select Japanese learners who fell into the following categories.

1. Intermediate learners of English
2. Those who were participating in Conversation in class in the formal educational setting and were taught by a Native English teacher
3. Those who tended to use silences for relatively a long time (at least more than 3.0 seconds before giving verbal reaction.)

The learners backgrounds varied slightly in terms of their specific aims for learning English. 80 percent of them were majoring in English or English and American literature as their main subject. The rest of them majored in Economics and Technology. The latter group of students had more specific practical aims for learning English. However, all expressed a strong desire to be able to use English better in the future. In addition, one third of the former group have had experiences of staying abroad for less than one month by participating in a home stay programme.

Learners of Japanese

As a control group, young-adult learners of Japanese in London who were taught by a Japanese native-speaker teacher (myself) were selected as the subjects. The intention was to look at whether learners from Western backgrounds keep their communicative style in learning Japanese. In addition, a comparison of the communicative and learning styles between Japanese learners of English and learners of Japanese was attempted in order to find out whether any similarities and differences existed in cross-cultural communication. In order to match the

subjects' background, it was decided to select the learners of Japanese who fell into the following categories.

1. Intermediate learners of Japanese
2. Those who were participating in Conversation in class in the formal educational setting and were taught by a native Japanese teacher

The learners backgrounds varied slightly in terms of their nationality. One out of eleven is a native Cantonese speaker who was brought up in England. The rest of them were native English speakers who were brought up in England. Two out of eleven have lived in Japan for a year. Only one subject had lived in Japan for three years for study. Although their nationalities and previous learning backgrounds are slightly varied, their level of Japanese and cultural background are almost identical.

The Method: Procedures

Since the analysis of the use of silence by the students in an actual learning setting was the main focus, a series of observations was made in the actual EFL context in Japan. Except for two groups of students who were taught by the same Western teacher, 5 out of 7 groups were taught by different teachers. Therefore, the topic and the methods used for teaching varied. However, the main aim of each lesson was to improve the learners' communication skill in speaking. The average number of students in a class was about 20 although it ranged from 15 to 26. As a focus group, a class at a women's college was selected and their classroom interaction was analysed in detail.

The Major Study

The major study was carried out 2 months after the new academic year had started in Japan. For the analysis of student interactions with teachers, and among peers, a video-recording was made. As the number of students is not very big in comparison to the number of students

at the secondary level (35-40), and the classroom atmosphere of each class was relatively relaxed, the researcher (myself) was allowed to move around the class freely in order to focus on some interactions (especially, the ones between a teacher and an individual or a few students). However, extra care was constantly taken not to disturb actual learning. The importance of video-recording will be discussed later in this section in relation to the problems of observation. The aim was to look at three types of interactions in class, the interaction between, 1) a teacher and a student (either in front of the class or individually), 2) a teacher and a few students, 3) a teacher and a whole class.

After each class was over, students were asked to write down the difficulties they felt in the class in which they just participated. In order to minimize disturbing the actual learning and also to elicit spontaneous quick responses from students,' a scribble sheet', which consisted of three main questions was provided. The procedure for filling in the form was demonstrated beforehand and five minutes were allocated to answer questions which asked whether or not they had difficulties in expressing themselves or not. If so, they were required to answer how often they felt this, what the difficulties were, and how they solved the problem. Also, their expectations of a teacher to support them in expressing themselves more freely and confidently were inquired.

The use of scribble sheets was adopted in order to ascertain the students' intention in using silence in class. This needed to be interpreted from their point of view. This is because it was anticipated that it would be more comfortable for them to express their true feelings in writing. In particular, the types of questions were very sensitive for them culturally and pedagogically in this research. Also, Japanese students' preference for writing rather than speaking in expressing their ideas was reported by some scholars. In addition, it was also assumed that they might feel

some distance between themselves and the researcher as an outsider in their learning circumstances. Therefore, it was considered that eliciting their intentions in the form of writing as soon as they had finished their lessons was a valid approach. The same procedure was carried out for learners of Japanese in London.

Informants' viewing session

After gathering actual data by observation, the selection of the focused scene and the analysis of the questionnaires were completed. In order to obtain feasible analysis of the recorded data on the use of silence, both Japanese and Native English speakers were invited to view the recording of classroom interactions between Japanese learners of English and a Western teacher. In addition, the interaction between learners of Japanese and a Japanese teacher in a Japanese class was viewed by informants. This extra viewing session was set up to make the interpretations of the use of silence more objective, being based not only on the researcher's analysis but also on the third persons' view. In order to obtain a group of people who have a similar background, the postgraduate students were invited to the viewing session to give their interpretation on the use of silence according to the pre-selected categories of possible interpretations. They were also required to give reasons for their interpretations of the use of silence. The discussion of this data was cross-checked with the participants' and the researcher's interpretations.

The problems observed in the major study

Van Lier (1983) claims that researchers need to show why techniques were chosen and what they are supposed to tell us. He adds that the sequence and process of researching should be reported, including false moves, blind alleys, problems encountered along the way and how they were dealt with.

In this major study, two types of problem were perceived. The first problem was related to the technical setting of the classroom observation. This inevitable problem had to do with the effect of the presence of video-recording equipment.

> As with other aspects of ethnographic research, then, recording, storing, and retrieving the data must be a reflexive processes in which descisions are made, monitored, and, if necessary, re-made in light of methodological and ethical considerations.
>
> (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:173)

In this study, video-taping of classroom interaction was considered the most appropriate way to collect data. This is largely because, as Fetterman (1989) points out, sensitivity to body language can also be instrumental in ethnographic research. That is, non-verbal behaviour such as eye contact, hand and head movement or other physical movement while students keep silent conveys to us useful messages and provides significant information. In a way, therefore, we need to look at participants' non-verbal behaviour in order to understand the use of silence. Otherwise, the period of silence in interaction can be interpreted in the wrong sense. I shall discuss both advantages and disadvantages in the use of video for the research. One of the strongest advantages is that we can review the data. Moreover, by pausing the scene, we can look at details of the behaviour of participants. This helps us to understand visual and verbal patterns of communication clearly and accurately. Furthermore, as Fetterman (1989) points out, the classroom atmosphere can be observed, and also, subtle teacher and student cues to each other can be identified.

In order to study interactants' communicative behaviour both verbally and non-verbally, it was essential to take both aspects into account as they play an equally important roles in the interpretation of the use of silence in relation to other significant communicative features.

On the other hand, some problems are identified. The first inevitable problem to be mentioned is that an awareness that proceedings are being recorded may significantly affect what occurs.

In a way, the classroom situation which includes the outsider (researcher), differs from the normal classroom situation. In order to minimize distraction from the actual learning process, the video recorder was set up before each class started so that the operation of the video would not increase unnecessary tensions. However, in spite of the extra care taken with the use of the video recorder, this definitely affected the learners classroom behaviour to a certain extent. In particular, at the beginning of the lesson, a few students were actually heard to be whispering 'I am nervous.' However, as time passed, they became more involved with actual learning , increasing their class participation. Moreover, since their motivation and willingness is high, their eager involvement with the activities itself made them get accustomed to having a video-recorder in the class.

The second technical and practical problem is the fact that the researcher was allowed to walk around the class freely so that the focused interaction could be recorded clearly. As each setting provided enough space for this, it did not appear to disturb students' learning. However, once actual recording and observations were conducted, both advantages and disadvantages became apparent. As far as disadvantages are concerned, another two practical problems were observed. One is a matter of noise effect in class. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) mention that because of higher background noise produced by increased movement of pupils around the room, the scope of the recording becomes more restricted.

The final biggest problem and limitation is that in using videotape equipment, there is the risk of tunnel vision. That is, the videotape can focus in on a certain type of behaviour to the

exclusion of almost all else in the classroom. Fetterman (1989) also mentions that this limitation leads to the fact that the ethnographer may arrive at a very good understanding of a specific educational mechanism, but achieve little understanding of its role in the classroom. For example, despite the fact that the researcher could focus upon particular interactions which could be a major point for the analysis of silence, when another interaction suddenly takes place in a place which is far from the video-camera, the recording of the interaction could not record a participants' detailed facial expression. A solution to the problem was attempted by setting another video-camera at the corner of the class. However, this also resulted in recording rather limited interactions in class in terms of visual and audio information. Therefore, it was decided to use only one video-recorder in order to minimise distraction.

The advantage of conducting an observation in this way was that it allowed the researcher to focus on the specific interaction. In particular, the voice of the subjects (learners) were generally too soft in comparison with the teacher's voice, therefore, the close observation among students enabled the researcher to record clear verbal and non-verbal expression for transcription. In addition, in reality, it is impossible to record everything as it is. Duranti (1997) also claims that:

> We cannot make visual and sound records of everything -for a variety of reasons that include ethical as well as economic, practical, and even theoretical considerations, even if we could approximate such a total audio-visual documentation, it would still never be the same as the experience of "being there." (Duranti 1997: 113)

It is also true that the use of video involves a danger which is the neglect of the wider context in which the events occured. However, if we pursue an understanding of a particular phenomenon in class under a theme, we need to decide what to focus on, and need to be selective of what to

record and how. Having examined both the advantages and disadvantages of the use of video, it is true that it brings some limitations. However, attempts to record accurate data in the appropriate way would help us to understand some aspects of the use of silence.

Summary

In this Chapter, the research design of the questionnaire, and the research design of the major recorded data collection, the selection of the subjects, the method for data elicitation, and the procedure of the method were presented. The problems in conducting the major study were also pointed out. There will be further discussion of the actual data gathered in the following two Chapters, Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

Chapter 7 The results of the Questionnaire

7.0 Introduction

The analysis of the questionnaires has two main objectives. First of all, it aimed at understanding the use of silence by Japanese students, and also eliciting actual difficulties which students have in expressing themselves; from the teachers, the most challenging aspects of teaching English to Japanese students were also elicited. The extent to which those difficulties and the use of silence are related, was also examined. Secondly, student and teacher interpretations of the use of silence were examined to understand what kinds of cultural gap exists, and also how those different expectations tend to lead to misunderstandings.

In addition, the same questionnaire was administered to both English learners of Japanese and native Japanese teachers of Japanese. This was done to compare and contrast their perceptions of the use of silence in communication with those of Japanese learners of English. In the first part, I shall give a brief statement about the respondents' learning and teaching backgrounds as information relevant to the interpretation of the data. Particular attention will be paid to the analysis of Part II and Part III.

7.1 The Analysis of Part I of the Questionnaires

Learners' learning background

Learners of English in Japan

The subjects of the questionnaire were 189 Japanese undergraduate students (71 male, 118 female), who were taking English conversation classes taught by native English teachers. They are in the first and second years of their study at several Universities and Colleges in Nagasaki

Prefecture. With regards to their learning experience of English, all of them have already studied English for about six to seven years at secondary level, mainly taught by Japanese teachers of English. Only 17 students out of 189 had experiences of studying English abroad,' about a month under the home stay programme in America, Australia, Canada and England. Only one student had spent a year abroad studying cooking in English .

Some of the students studied English at language schools while they were at primary school, and some of them were at the time of the study being taught some subjects using English. However, classes revolved around reading textbooks in their specialist areas. Most students also spent a certain amount of time listening to music or watching videos in English at home. However, they did not feel that it helped them in improving their communication skills since they were not consciously spending time on such activities to improve their English ability. Moreover, students stated that they had very little opportunity to communicate with others in English, especially with native speakers, other than by attending English conversation classes taught by native English teachers for three hours (average) per week.

Learners of Japanese in London

The questionnaire was also administered to learners of Japanese in London attending Japanese lessons in higher education. Nearly half of them (23 out of 54) are undergraduate students taught by Japanese teachers once or twice a week as a part of their degree course in the U.K. The rest of them are learning Japanese on a weekly adult education school course.

69.2% of them studied Japanese in Japan before. In comparison to Japanese learners

of English in Japan, these learners of Japanese had then more opportunity to communicate with others in a real Japanese context. However, at the time of the study, they state that they have very little opportunity to communicate with others in Japanese other than by attending Japanese lessons for 1.5 to 3 hours per week.

Self-evaluation of language proficiency

In this questionnaire, the subjects were asked to self-evaluate their level of proficiency. Since this is a self-evaluation, this may not match their level of language proficiency. However, the focus here, is on how they perceive their proficiency level as an indication of their confidence in each of the skills.

Table 7.1 Self-evaluation of language proficiency

Skills	Reading		Writing		Speaking		Listening	
	LE	LJ	LE	LJ	LE	LJ	LE	LJ
Beginner	18.8	23.0	22.0	23.1	55.9	7.7	37.3	7.6
Pre- Intermediate	56.4	46.2	60.1	76.9	35.8	69.2	45.7	46.2
Upper-Intermediate	16.5	30.8	17.9	0	8.3	23.1	15.5	46.2
Advanced	8.3	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0

LE = Learners of English, LJ = Learners of Japanese (%)
Note: All percentages are rounded down to the nearest whole number

Main Conclusion 1: Learners' language proficiency and confidence in speaking

From this, it can be seen that the Japanese students of English are less confident about their speaking ability in comparison with other skills. On the other hand, learners of Japanese are more confident with their speaking and listening ability.

Overall results

As far as their (LE) level of English is concerned, large numbers of students consider that their

speaking ability is at beginner's level (55.9%) and at pre-intermediate (35.8%) while they regard their listening, reading, and writing skills as better than their speaking. They are slightly less confident about their listening ability (45.7% of students self-evaluated as pre-intermediate). For reading, 56.4%, and for writing, 60.1% of students rated themselves as pre-intermediate level. From this result, it can be found that the subjects of LE in this study are less confident with speaking prominently.

Teachers of English and teachers of Japanese

The subjects were 42 native English teachers and 40 Japanese teachers. The overall teaching experience varied from one year to 35 years. With experience of teaching Japanese learners of English, most of the native English teachers taught in a monolingual setting in Japan. Only 3 teachers had taught English to Japanese students in both monolingual and multilingual settings. In addition, most of them previously spent some time abroad for various reasons. It seemed that those experiences provided them with different perspectives of the learners' cultural backgrounds. Also, most of them were learning Japanese. Two thirds of them were at beginners' level, 7 out of 42 were at intermediate level, and four of them were fluent speakers of Japanese. It appears then that they were relatively familiar with, or at least aware of, the Japanese ways of communication and the Japanese cultural backgound. In addition, 40 teachers of Japanese in higher education were also asked to answer the questionnaire.

7.2 The Analysis of Part II of the Questionnaires

Question 1-3 and 5, 6 of the teacher's questionnaire were concerned with how teachers perceived student characteristics in the learning context. These questions are not then directly

related to the use of silence by learners. However, it was assumed that it would be hard for respondents to answer the questions on the use of silence straightaway, since silences exist mostly at an un-conscious level. Thus, these questions function as a 'warmer.'

Question 1: Which aspects do you enjoy most in teaching English (Japanese) to Japanese (English) students?

Table 7.2 Enjoyable aspects in teaching

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Seeing students progress & enthusiasm in learning	42.9	44.4	36.4
.Free situational conversation with students	0	13.9	18.2
.Genuine interest in teaching	28.6	13.9	9.1
. Students characteristics (Total) (inc. *friendliness,politeness, warmth, co-operation, discipline and good natured hard-working / studious, respect for teachers, listened carefully and take good notes, finding students' individual characters)*	14.2	28.0	27.3
.Not enjoyable because of the burden of exams.	7.1	0	0
.Designing syllabus	0	9.1	

JET = Japanese English teacher, NET = Native English teacher, NJT = Native Japanese teacher: (%)

Main Conclusion 2: Enjoyable aspects in teaching

With regard to Question 1, - which aspects teachers enjoy in teaching English to Japanese students,- nearly half the teachers (JET 42.9%, NET 44.2%, NJT 36.4%) from each group answered that they enjoy seeing students progress, or show enthusiasm for learning and communicating in the target language. Other reasons are listed by the subjects slightly differently.

Overall results

28.6% of JET are genuinly interested in teaching a foreign language. Also, 7.1% of them referred to students' studious characteristics in learning as an enjoyable point.

As well as a genuine interest in teaching, 13.9% of NET state that they enjoy free-situational conversation with students, which is not pointed out by JET. Another main difference between JET and NET is that more NET referred to student characteristics such as politeness, co-operation, hard-work and discipline. It seems that this difference comes from the difference of individual teachers' teaching backgrounds. Since NET have experiences in teaching English to other nationalities, they were able to compare Japanese students characteristics to those of other nationalities, whereas JET have teaching experience mainly in a mono-lingual settings.

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Question 2: What types of activities do your students enjoy?

Table 7.3 Students' preferred activities

	JET % (n=53)	NET % (n=62)	NJT % (n=56)
.Discussion / speaking in the target language	28.6	17.7	7.1
.Conversational games	28.6	30.6	14.2
. TPR (Total Physical Resonse)	4.8	1.6	0
. Role play	4.8	6.5	7.1
. Pair / group work	4.8	22.6	22.9
. Free composition	4.8	0	0
.Watching video / film	9.5	4.9	0
. Songs / Music	9.5	3.2	0
.Quiz	4.8	4.9	0
.Communicative activities	0	1.6	0
.Anything fun	0	1.6	0
.Depends on the class	0	1.6	7.1
.Work sheet	0	1.6	0
.Thinking activity	0	1.6	7.1
. *Kanji* (Japanese writing)	0	0	7.1
. Personalization	0	0	7.1
. Communicating with native speakers	0	0	7.1
.Cartoon	0	0	7.1
. Realia	0	0	7.1

Note: All percentages are rounded down to the nearest whole number
% is calculated according to the number of answers given.

Main Conclusion 3: Students' preferred activities

Regarding question 2, on students' activity preferences, there are three common views and one distinctive view between JET and NET. Firstly, a similar proportion of teachers from both groups (JET 28.6%, NET 30.6%, NJT 14.2%) believe that students prefer games.

Furthermore, a similar percentage of JET and NET also consider that Japanese students like free-speaking in English, especially with intermediate and advanced level students. However, there was a difference in their comments on the types of activity in games or in speaking. Two NET point out that students are more comfortable with group-oriented and pre-structured activity such as prepared presentation or non-individually focused games. They also state that the types of group work need to be very controlled, with a small number of students, and should be non-threatening to the individual.

Overall results

The main difference between JET and NET was the role of group and pair work. Only 4.8% of JET regarded group or pair work as students' preferred activity while 22.6% of NET consider that Japanese students are more comfortably engaged in those activities. In addition, 22.9% of NJT consider that LJ also enjoy pair / group work. Furthermore, 3 NET gave similar comments described above. There is a possibility that this difference between JET and NET derives from the differences in their cultural backgrounds. Since JET themselves had been in the same learning situation with students in terms of cultural background, they might not perceive the preference for group-work as a very distinctive characteristic of Japanese learners like NET.

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Question 3: What was your first impression in teaching English / Japanese to Japanese / English students?

Table 7.4 The first impression in teaching English / Japanese to students

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Need to keep their motivation high	14.3	0	0
.Quiet, shy, silent	7.1	28.6	0
.Difficulty in expressing themselves	0	20.0	18.1
.Passive	28.6	8.6	0
.Eager to learn, motivated	21.6	17.1	27.4
.Lack of confidence	7.1	0	0
.Skills were not higher than expected (gap between knowledge and oral skill)	0	11.4	0
.Inadequate previous training, more psychological support is needed	0	14.3	0
.Depends on the students	7.1	0	0
.Friendly, warm	7.1	0	9.1
.Polite	7.1	0	9.1
.Serious	0	0	18.1
.Nervous	0	0	9.1
.Need step by step approach	0	0	9.1

Note: % is calculated according to the number of respondents

Main Conclusion 4: The first impression of students

Question 3 asked about the first impression in teaching the target language to students. The perspectives between JET and NET differed slightly. 28.6% of NET had the impression that they were shy or quiet, and also saw them as having difficulties in expressing themselves in English (20%). On the other hand, only 7.1% of JET thought that Japanese students are shy or quiet, but 28.6% of them regarded Japanese students as passive learners. However, some NET consider that this passiveness derives not from their shyness, but from lack of training, and think that students need appropriate training in expressing themselves in English, and more psychological support to do so. This point was raised by other NETs who were surprised by the fact that students actual skills were not higher than expected, especially between linguistic knowledge and oral skills and also between writing and speaking.

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Question 5: Do you feel that Japanese / English students are rather shy or quiet?

Table 7.5 Students' characteristics

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Yes	93.3	41.2	0
.Most	0	2.9	0
.Some	0	20.6	18.1
.Only until I know them well	0	5.9	0
.At first	0	8.8	0
.Compared to other nationalities	0	2.9	0
. No	0	11.8	46.5
.'Yes' in class, 'No' outside class	0	5.9	0
. Not sure	6.7	0	0
. Depends on students	0	0	36.4

Note: % is calculated according to the number of respondents

Main Conclusion 5: Students' characteristics

Questions 5 and 6 directly ask whether teachers think that Japanese students are shy or quiet and also whether they feel uncomfortable with students' silence. A high proportions of the respondents from JET (93.3%) considered that Japanese students are shy and quiet. On the other hand, only half of the NET regard the students as shy or quiet. One NET specifically referred to this point and said that the reason for students' shyness is more culturally specific. However, most NET also felt that Japanese students are shy or quiet at different stages of their teaching.

Overall results

NET provided more specific situations when they felt that Japanese students are shy or quiet. 20.6% of NET felt that some students were, shy but not everyone. Some NET said that their impression changes as time goes by. Others state that their impression is described in comparison with other nationalities. Moreover, 11.8% of NET pointed out that students show different characteristics when they are in class from when they are outside class. Therefore, in

total, about 70% of NET have at one time or another, felt that Japanese students are shy. However, this impression seems to change gradually by getting to know students and their cultural backgrounds. The difference between JET and NET might have arisen from their cultural backgrounds and teaching experiences.

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Question 6: Do you feel uncomfortable if your students do not answer your questions immediately?

Table 7.6 Discomfort in the use of silence

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Yes	12.5	5.7	10.0
. No	56.3	31.4	70.0
.At the beginning, at first	0	25.7	0
. Sometimes	25.0	17.1	20.0
. Slightly	0	8.6	0
. Accustomed	0	8.6	0
. Depends on the situation	6.3	2.9	0

Note: % is calculated according to the number of the respondents

Main Conclusion 6: Discomfort in the use of silence

Question 6 asks whether teachers feel uncomfortable if students do not answer their questions immediately. The main difference is that 56.3% of JET do not feel uncomfortable whereas 31.4% of NET do not feel uncomfortable. That is, nearly 70 % of NET have felt uncomfortable somehow. On the contrary, 70% of NJT comment that they are not uncomfortable with students' silence. However, as in question 5, their discomfort has diminished as they got to know students.

Overall results

A Japanese teacher gives further explanation as follows:

> It depends on the content of the question and the reason for

> not answering questions. So, I do not feel uncomfortable only because the student does not give a response immediately.
> (Japanese Teacher 1)

It seems that Japanese teachers are culturally more accustomed to the existence of silence and slightly less concerned with the spontaneity of students' responses. As the results of question 5 and 6 show, most NETs' impressions apparently change as they become aware of students' culturally oriented behaviours. Here are some comments from NETs.

> . Most students are quiet but I think that stems from the fact that students are not normally encouraged to give their opinions to a teacher during a class. (NET 1)
> . It is a national character and somehow a method followed in their educational system. (NET 7)
> . They simply behave as expected in different situations. (NET 11)
> . Japanese students do not want to engage in culturally inappropriate behaviour when they are with members of their cultural group. Drawing attention to themselves is culturally inappropriate. They are terrified of being ridiculed or ostracised by the group. They are afraid of being challenged in public because they are afraid to win and afraid to lose. (NET 7)

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Teachers' question 4: What is the most challenging aspect for you in teaching English / Japanese to students?

Table 7.7- (a) The most challenging aspect for teachers

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
. Making them (students) understand	0	5.7	0
. Getting them to talk, get response from them	25.0	17.1	0
. Building confidence	0	8.6	0
. Motivating them	25.0	17.1	0
. Maximising the use of target language	0	2.9	0
. Getting them to ask questions	0	5.7	0
. Letting them take risks, responsibility	33.3	8.6	0
. I need to understand my students	0	8.6	0
. Large classes	0	5.7	0

. Textbooks	0	5.7	0
. Individual differences	0	5.7	0
. Method itself	0	2.9	10.0
. Correction	0	2.9	0
. Grammar explanation	8.4	3.0	40.0
. Teaching culture	8.3	0	10.0
. Ensuring that they pass the exam.	0	0	10.0
. Preparation for lessons	0	0	10.0
. Teaching politeness	0	0	10.0
. Preparing for unexpected questions	0	0	10.0

Note: % is calculated according to the number of respondents

Students' question 1: What are the difficulties when you communicate with your teacher and with your classmates in the target language during the lesson?

Table 7.7- (b) Student difficulties

	LE % (n=180)	LJ % (n=37)
.Problem with understanding	13.4	0
.Problem with lack of vocabulary	30.0	41.7
.Problem with how to express myself	43.4	33.3
.General poor proficiency	0	8.3
.Lack of confidence with pronunciation	4.8	0
.Lack of confidence with grammatical accuracy	2.6	0
.Lack of confidence in general	2.4	8.3
.Difficulty in communicating for a certain amount of time	1.0	0
.Difficulty in maintaining eye contact	1.7	0
.Need time to digest information	0.4	0
.Difficulty in dealing with unfamiliar topics	0.3	0
.Different levels of students	0	8.4

Note: % is calculated according to the number of answers given

Question 4 of the teachers' questionnaire asked what was the most challenging for them in teaching English (Japanese) to Japanese (Western) students. This result was compared with what students perceived as the difficulties they felt in communicating with their teachers or with peers in English.

Learners of English and English teachers

Main Conclusion 7-(a): Japanese learners' difficulties

There are four main points to be discussed here. Firstly, both students and NETs pointed out that the problem of understanding (helping students understand) was one of the most challenging things. Both Japanese and native English teachers feel that it is also difficult to stimulate students to talk. Students also refer to the issue of lack of confidence in orally expressing themselves.

Overall results

Since Japanese English teachers can make students understand by giving instruction in Japanese, no Japanese teachers pointed this out. While English Native teachers generally state that they have difficulties in making students understand. Their difficulties seem to derive from the problem with listening, lack of understanding what has been asked (content of questions), and what they are required to do. 13.45% of students felt difficulties in understanding in total.

Secondly, the most challenging aspect for teachers matches with that which one student commented on. Both Japanese and native teachers feel that it is difficult to get students to talk (JET=25%, NET=17.1%), while students also experience difficulties in making themselves understood. They provided two main reasons for this. One is that 30% of them say that they have a problem with vocabulary in expressing themselves. Another is that nearly half of them (43.4%) feel that they have a problem with expressing their ideas in English. Here, the problem is a matter of how to construct their ideas in English, including the issue of translating their ideas from Japanese into English, spontaneous response, and the difficulty in expressing themselves fully in English. The second significant issue is a matter of 'confidence'. Both JET and NET think that students need to build their confidence, and that they need to be encouraged to take risks. They should take responsibility for themselves. On the other hand, students also feel a lack of confidence in expressing themselves. This stems from various reasons. There are students

who lack confidence in general. Other students more specifically state that they lack confidence in their pronunciation (4.8%), grammatical accuracy (2.6%) and maintaining communication for a certain amount of time. From their responses, they seem to need different and specific support to make them confident according to the situation. Moreover, teachers, especially NETs, have difficulties with practical matters such as class size methods to be used, and correction.

Learners of Japanese and Japanese teachers

Main Conclusion 7-(b): Student' difficulties

Japanese learners seem to experience similar problems and difficulties as expressed by English learners. In total, nearly 70% of the respondents pointed out that they have linguistic problems (lack of vocabulary 41.7%, grammatical accuracy 33.3%). Also, there were respondents who mentioned a lack of confidence (8.3%). Thus, learners of Japanese mainly had linguistic problems, while learners of English experienced both linguistic and psychological difficulties.

Overall results

However, with respect to the matter of confidence, the main difference is that learners of English mentioned more specific aspects of their own weakness such as pronunciation and grammatical accuracy. In addition, there were respondents (LE) who referred to non-verbal aspects of interaction. On the other hand, most Japanese teachers listed points concerning the teaching methods themselves, rather than motivating students or making them confident in expressing themselves.

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Students' question 2: (a) During an English / a Japanese lesson, do you feel that you want more time to think before responding to teachers or your class mates?

Table 7.8 Need more time to think

LE (%)		LJ (%)
15.5 ******	a) always	0
33.6 **********	b) sometimes	********** 46.2
43.6**********	c) seldom	******* 15.4
7.3 **	d) not at all	********** 38.5

(b) Why do you feel this?

	LE % (n=187)	LJ % (n=48)
1) I need enough time to translate my idea	52.1	23.1
2) The speed or tempo in the target language is much faster than the speed or tempo in my mother tongue	21.5	23.1
3) I need enough time to sum up my idea	21.8	23.1
4) Others	0.7	0
5) Not Applicable (No problem)	3.9	30.7

Note: % is calculated according to the number of answers given.

Main Conclusion 8: Need more time to think

Question 2 of the students' questionnaire asked how frequently they felt that they wanted more time to think before responding to teachers or their classmates. Nearly 40% of LE answered that they seldom felt this. However, a similar proportion of respondents answered that they sometimes did. However, 15.5% of LE felt that they always needed more time to think or reformulate their answers or ideas before responding while no LJ expressed that they always needed time to think.

In Question 2-(b), the possible reasons were asked in the form of a closed question. Nearly half of them (52%) answered that they needed enough time to translate their ideas into English. Nearly one quarter of them (21.5%) chose the second reason, which is the difference in tempo or speed in spoken interaction in Japanese and English. The need for more time to sum up their ideas was chosen (21.8%).

This may indicate that those respondents have more difficulties in linguistic aspects than in

dealing with different conversational mechanisms between English and Japanese. This point will be discussed in more detail later. On the other hand, learners of Japanese chose different reasons more or less equally. Therefore, there is no prominent reason for this problem and 30.7% actually mentioned that they did not have this kind of problem.

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Students' question 3: How often do you remain silent because of lack of confidence in expressing yourself?

Table 7.9-(a) Being silent because of lack of confidence

LE %		LJ %
18.1********	(a) always	0
25.1**********	(b) sometimes	**********33.3
42.5**********	(c) seldom	**********41.7
14.3******	(d) not at all	**********25.0

Students' question 3-(b): What are the reasons for remaining silent?

Table 7.9-(b) Reasons for remaining silent

	LE % (n=179)	LJ % (n=41)
Linguistic problems		
.Problem with vocabulary	18.6	37.0
.Problem in expressing myself	32.2	27.5
.Problem in understanding	8.2	0
. Problem with translation	5.1	0
. Doubt about accuracy of my grammar	3.1	0
Problem with time		
. Lack of time	1.3	0
Problem with turn-taking		
. Was not given chance to speak out, turns were not allocated	1.6	0
. I usually raise my hand to express my opinion	0.9	0
. Missed timing (Others speak before I do, teacher moves on to other sts, difficulty in claiming turn)	5.5	0
. Teacher did not notice my small voice	0.7	0
. I have spoken too much, I want to give someone else a chance	0	11.5
Psychological problem: confidence		
. Lack of confidence, nervousness, shyness	8.4	24.0

. Because of my level of the target language	6.2	0
. Because of tensed atmosphere	2.3	0
. Lack confidence with my own idea	4.1	0
. I say something in my mind	0.7	0
. Lack of confidence with pronunciation	0.4	0
. Feel desperately in a hurry	0.7	0

Note: Percentages are calculated according to the number of answers given

Teachers' question 7-(a): If your students keep silent, how do you interpret their use and meaning of silence?

Table 7.9-(c) Teachers' interpretation of silence

Interpretation	JET % (n=52)	NET % (n=58)	NJT % (n=46)
. Sts do not know the answer	29.4	6.7	28.9
. Sts do not understand	11.8	33.3	19.8
. Thinking how to answer	29.4	22.2	33.3
. Shyness	5.9	6.7	4.8
. Boredom	11.8	4.4	0
. Cultural reasons	5.9	20.0	6.6
. Depends on the situation	5.9	6.7	6.6

Note: % is calculated according to the number of answeres given

Main Conclusion 10: Teachers' interpretation of silence

Question 3 of students' questionnaire asks them how often they tend to remain silent despite having their own ideas. 18.1% of them chose 'always', 25.1% of them chose ' frequently' and 42.5% of them have chosen 'sometimes'. It seems that most of them somehow have reasons for being silent although the frequency of feeling differs among individuals. In the following question, they are required to give reasons for being silent. As well as learners, teachers are also asked how they interpret the meaning of silence created by students in class.

In this, the results of the Japanese and the English teachers showed a slight difference. First, about 30% of JET and NJT consider that it is because students simply do not know the answer (29.4%) or they are thinking about how to answer in English. NET also think similarly in terms

of thinking time (NET 22,2%, NJT 33.3%), but point out that the reasons would come from lack of understanding with what to do, with understanding the meaning of questions (33.3%) and also from cultural reasons (20%).

Nearly half of LE explain the meaning of their use of silence in terms of linguistic difficulties such as lack of linguistic knowledge or lack of understanding but also give specific cultural reasons as Native English Teachers point out. Although the main reasons for being silent derive from linguistic problems (lack of vocabulary 18.6%, lack of grammatical knowledge 32.3%), there are several points to be borne in mind. These concern turn-taking and confidence. With regards to turn-taking in class, in total 5.5% of them have experienced difficulty in claiming a turn, and therefore, missed the chance to express themselves.

In addition, two respondents stated that they were not given chances to express themselves.That is, they thought that a turn was not allocated to them. Judging from their responses, there are learners who think that they should respond or express themselves when they are required to do so. Also, LJ mentioned that there are occasions when they miss the chance mainly because the topic has already moved to the other. However, there were no respondents who considered that a turn needed to be allocated by a teacher. This different expectations between LJ and LE about teacher-student relationships seems to indicate culturally different expectations in the the learning context. That is, their expected classroom behaviour differs from the Western pedagogical perspective which allows learners to compete for turns, or volunteer in order to freely express themselves and exchange ideas.

One respondent also pointed out that they are not accustomed to participating in the lesson actively in English, and feel desperately in a hurry to say something but fail to do so under

pressure. The second culturally oriented reason is their lack of confidence in expressing themselves in class. 21% of them answered that they lacked confidence and felt nervous. There are some reasons for being nervous. One is that they lacked confidence with their level of English. As this point was shown in Question 1, they seem to be insecure with their pronunciation or grammatical accuracy. The second reason is that they lack confidence in their own ideas. That is, they tend to be silent when they are not sure whether their answers are right or if their ideas differ from those of others.

It might sound strange that Japanese students are too awkward to state their opinions freely. However, this relates to one of the cultural norms, *Wa* and their consensus-decision making which are discussed in Chapter 3. In order to keep harmony, there are students who think that they should provide answers which match others' ideas. This lack of confidence also relates to the volume of their voices in class. It would be more clearly observed how soft their voices are when watching actual collected data in class. In this questionnaire, one respondent stated that she remained silent since the teacher did not notice her small voice. Judging by the responses from learners, as well as by linguistic problems, they seem to have difficulties in expressing themselves because of cultural reasons. In spite of having their own ideas, something reflected in their mind or something whispered in a small voice is not actually heard, and therefore, not sent properly to other participants (teachers and other peers).

<u>Learners of Japanese and Native Japanese teachers</u>

5% of learners of Japanese also mentioned that they lacked confidence because of nervousness or shyness. However, no respondents mentioned that they hesitate or lack confidence because they are self-conscious in a group. In this respect, the reasons for being less confident for LE and LJ differ. Interestingly, no NJT considered that LJ were too shy in expressing themselves.

This difference shows that LE show awkwardness more than LJ because of cultural reasons.

Strategies for students to overcome difficulties in expressing themselves

In order to solve these problems, what can learners and teachers do? In the following 2 questions, both teachers and students give some ideas. Teachers provide strategies they normally use to break students' silence. Students are asked what they expect teachers to do for them in order to get rid of students' difficulties in expressing themselves.

Teachers' question 7-(b): What do you do if your students keep silent?

Table 7.10-(a) Strategies to elicit students' response

Strategy	JET % (n=46)	NET % (n=48)	NJT % (n=43)
. Encourage them to say something	16.7	0	7.6
. Be patient	0	3.7	0
. In team-teaching, let JET help sts	0	3.7	0
. I adjust my teaching style	0	3.7	0
. Try to make myself relaxed	0	3.7	0
. Return to the student later	0	3.7	0
. Give clues (verbally / non-verbally)	49.9	7.5	30.8
. Wait / Give time	16.7	25.9	38.5
. Call on a student by name individually	0	7.4	0
. Teach useful phrase to fill	0	3.7	0
. Allow them to work with friends	0	3.7	0
. Move on to another student	16.7	14.8	0
. Repeat, rephrase, explaining, ask again	0	14.8	23.1
. Advise not to be silent, say something to benefit, talk as much as possible	0	3.7	0

Note: % is calculated according to the number of the answers given

Main Conclusion 11: Strategies for overcoming difficulties

In terms of strategies for helping students, it can be seen that both teachers of English and Japanese use similar strategies. However, NETs use slightly more variable strategies such as being patient, adjustment of teaching style and allocation of turns.

Overall results

Question 7 of the teachers' questionnaire also asked what strategies the teacher usually utilised

when students kept silent. The highest proportion (49.9%) of the JETs answered that they gave clues to students, while the highest proportion of the NETs answered that they waited for students' responses. This was the second highest proportion of answers by JETs. In addition, JETs listed a few strategies, including 'encourage students to say something', 'rephrasing questions, and ask again,' 'move on to another student if it is apparent that students do not know the answer.'

On the other hand, most NETs did list more various concrete strategies such as 'call on individually,''teach useful phrase to fill','allow them to work with friends,''adjust to them','be patient,''say something to learn.' Certain strategies listed by the NETs are unique such as 'adjust to students,' or 'call on individually.' Although calling students by name is one of the traditional pedagogical strategies in Japan, this may be a new strategy for younger Western teachers in terms of its frequency. NJT listed two main strategies for helping students to express themselves more freely. Nearly 40% of them said that they would wait and about 30% said that they would give clues.

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Students' question 7: When you have difficulties explaining yourself in spoken English / Japanese what do you expect your teacher to do for you?

Table 7.10-(b) Students' expectations of teachers' teaching strategies

Expectation	LE % (n=171)	LJ % (n=36)
Linguistic aspects		
. Give examples	7.9	0
. Give clues	9.4	0
. Give advice on how to say something	15.1	26.6
. Help with how to start	2.9	0
. Help with vocabulary	14.4	0
. Help in my mother tongue	2.2	0
. Explain in detail	2.9	0
. No use of my mother tongue	0	6.7
. Translation, write on board	0	6.7

. Feedback and correction	3.6	20.0
Time support		
. Give more time to think	6.5	0
Questioning		
. Make the meaning of question clearer	7.2	0
. Use more simple words (paraphrasing)	10.8	0
. Further questioning	1.4	0
. Yes / No question first	1.4	0
Psychological aspects		
. Need back-channelling response when T understands what I want to say	1.4	0
. Willingness to understand	2.9	0
. Encouragement, esp. on making errors	2.9	20.0
. Understanding non-verbal behaviour	0.7	0
. Step by step, patience	0.7	20.0
. Satisfaction if not forced to say something	1.4	0
Turn-taking		
. Speak slowly / slow down the pace	2.9	0
. Give me an opportunity to talk	0.7	0
. Do not call my name individually	0.7	0

Note: % is calculated according to the number of answers given

Main Conclusion 11-(b): Students' expectation

Students give more concrete strategies which they expect teachers to use to help them in expressing themselves. Judging from students' responses, as NET pointed out in Question 2, Japanese students seem to be more comfortable with semi-structured guidance in giving their opinions. Even taking turns for expressing their ideas is supposed to be initiated by teachers. Besides, they stated that they also needed psychological support, especially on not being afraid of making mistakes. The expectations of learners of Japanese also related to both linguistic and psychological help.

However, there were no respondents who mentioned turn-allocation and questioning. Their answers are divided into six groups according to their needs:

1) help with how to express their idea,
2) some modification in asking questions,
3) importance of feedback, including correction,

4) understanding students' non-verbal behaviour,
5) providing opportunities to speak, helping with turn-taking
6) psychological support
7) time support

With the first expectation, there is a common strategy listed for both teachers and students,

This is to give clues in order to make it easier for students to express their opinions or ideas. However, students listed more detailed strategies for this, including 'give examples','lead or guide us to tell my opinion,''help with how to start','help with vocabulary,''explain in detail.' Judging from their responses, they seem to need some structured guidance in order to make them comfortable with saying something.

Regarding the questions asked by teachers in class, both teachers and students listed the strategy of paraphrasing the question to make students feel more comfortable in offering a response. Interestingly, students listed three more strategies which are; 'make the meaning of the question clear,''further questioning,'and 'ask yes/no question first.' Their responses show that they need a step by step procedures to give their opinions. As for feedback and correction, they claim that they need feedback or correction after they say something in order to make sure that the things they said are correct and also appropriately expressed.

As far as the third point is concerned, three respondents referred to the non-verbal aspect of communication. One respondent stated that she or he expected teachers to understand their non-verbal behaviour. Two respondents more specifically referred to the use of back-channelling cues (Aizuchi). They commented that they expected teachers to show their understanding if they understood what students wanted to say by giving *Aizuchi*. With turn-taking, there are two opposite expectations.

One is that students wanted teachers to initiate the turn for student-teacher interaction. On the

other hand, there are students who felt more pressure if they were called by their names and asked to state their opinion. Fifth, with psychological support, they listed several points such as 'willingness to understand' and 'encouragement, and (psychological support) especially on not being afraid of making mistakes.'

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Teachers' question 8: When you teach English / Japanese to Japanese / Western students, do you take extra care to take cultural differences into account?

Table 7.11-(a) Taking extra care to take cultural differences into account

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
. Yes	50.0	75.8	90.0
. No	28.6	12.2	0
. Depends on the level	0	3.0	0
. Not sufficiently	0	3.0	0
. Not always	0	3.0	10.0
. In some ways	21.4	3.0	0

(b) Types of care to be taken

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=40)
. I teach my own (American) culture	0	14.3	0
. I take care, especially with beginners to break barriers		7.1	0
. Try to understand students' feeling	0	21.4	0
. I adjust automatically, unconsciously	0	7.1	0
. I am not sure whether I have stereotypes or not		7.1	0
. Be culturally sensitive	0	21.7	0
. Try not to put sts on the spot, let them work in groups	0	7.1	0
. Not to talk too slowly	0	7.1	0
. To speak slowly	0	7.1	0
. Teach difference of communicative style between the West and the Orient	25.0	0	0
. Let them know that there are diffrences	25.0	0	0
. Give lots of examples	25.0	0	0
. Explain to NET that LE's passivity does not mean that they are not learning	25.0	0	0
. Teach level of speech	0	0	25.0
. To forbid what is socio-culturally unacceptable		0	25.0
. Interaction with students (turn-taking, non-verbal behaviour)		0	25.0

		230
. Variety of learning activities, learners' learning strategies	0	25.0

Note: % is calculated according to the number of the respondents

Students ' question 8: What would you like teachers to understand about your culture or your culture's way of communicating with others?

For this question, respondents gave various answers and their answers could be categorized as follows;

<u>Japanese learners of English</u>

1) Difference of the language system between Japanese and English itself (1.2%)
2) Individual differences (1.2%)
3) Difference of learning styles, especially previous learning experience (6.2%)
4) Different communicative styles (1.2%)
5) differences in non-verbal behaviour
   . less eye-contact (4.8%)
   . use of body language (1.2%)
   . use of *Aizuchi* to keep tempo in conversation (1.2%)
6) Japanese cultural norms (63.2%)
   . We are not so open (use of *enryo*)
   . Politeness / existence of the level of speech
   . Japanese are shy in comparison to Westerners
   . Not everyone is active. There are students who have their own ideas and know the answers but are poor at expressing their opinions
   . We say something indirectly
   . I want the teacher to understand the Japanese cultural backgound, characteristics, weaknesses
   . Japanese want somebody to take the initiative / create the opportunity to talk
   . There are answers which can not be understood, only yes / no
   . Japanese people tend not to ask private matters in detail.
   . Japanese people are not accustomed to saying something by themselves, willingly, in public.
   . The Japanese have soft voices and do not express own ideas easily.
   . When we are not sure, we tend to be silent.
   . Being afraid of being shamed
   . The way of thinking and concepts differ
   . The Japanese are always conscious of others' ideas
   . The Japanese put the value on the use of silence / want T to wait a bit more.

Main Conclusion 12: Cultural understanding

Question 7 and 8 of the teachers' questionnaire asked what kind of cultural points they usually took into account in teaching English to Japanese students. The points they listed include 'try

to understand students' feeling,' 'be culturally sensitive,''try not to put students on the spot,' 'adjusting a lot unconsciously', and so on. This shows that the NETs are trying to be culturally sensitive and somehow adjust their teaching styles to the ones that Japanese students feel comfortable or familiar with. On the other hand, students' comments on their expectations that teachers would support them in speaking freely varied.

With regard to the Japanese language system, three respondents pointed out the differences of the grammatical system and the way of pronouncing sounds. As far as the Japanese educational system is concerned, five respondents stated that their previous learning style, learning experience and emphasis in English learning at the Secondary level were different from the one which they are currently encouraged to try. That is, since the emphasis was on writing or on grammar, they felt awkward in speaking and did not know how to do it. This point indicates that they need to be provided with opportunities to know and learn new learning strategies to improve their speaking skills. This is possible if the teachers' aim, which is to develop students' oral skills, meets students' aims.

Overall results

If learners cannot have opportunities to know new learning strategies, both teachers and students would be at a loss and feel frustrated because of different teaching or learning styles or expectations. Regarding 'individual differences,' three respondents stated that they wanted teachers to understand that there are learners who have their own ideas or know the answer, but who are too shy to state their ideas in public. A high proportion of respondents listed various points to be understood in Japanese communicative style and Japanese cultural norms. With their communicative style, they pointed out several aspects as shown above. From their responses, it might seem that the Japanese use rather passive strategies to communicate from

the Western point of view. However, as I discussed in Chapter 3 and 4, Japanese communicative style is deeply related to their cultural norms. That is, cultural norms are significant aspects which explain the reasons for the Japanese to communicate in their own style. Moving from general views to more specific ones, it seems that they tend to communicate with certain consciousness, especially in relation to the existence of others. In addition, five respondents referred to non-verbal aspects of communication. In particular, they pointed out that the Japanese look into somebody's eyes less than Westerners do and that they are poor at doing so. This point was also listed as one of the difficulties students have. It will be discussed later in this chapter.

Learners of Japanese and Japanese teachers

Main Conclusion 13: Cultural understanding

The points listed by LJ were also mainly concerned with psychological support (7.7%), and understanding different communicative style (lots of interaction, direct questions = 15.3%, straightforwardness= 7.7%). On the other hand, NJT also referred to both linguistic and social aspects which should be taken into account as important cultural differences.

Overall results

With regards to the linguistic aspect, 25% of JT referred to the use of the level of speech which is a significant element in maintaining a good relationship with others in language use in a Japanese context and has a complicated system in use. As far as the social aspect is concerned, they referred to both expected behaviour in the Japanese context and learners' (from Western background) communicative style. There were teachers who tried to forbid some behaviour which is culturally unacceptable or things which the Japanese are not comfortable with

such as eating something on the street or during the class. There were also teachers who tried to adopt learners' communicative style in terms of turn-taking and the use of non-verbal behaviour.

The summary:

From both the teachers' and the learners' answers, it can be found that they take several culturally important points into account when teaching / learning the target language. Although it is impossible for us to tell how much cultural awareness they have, their awareness of cultural differences between the West and Japan was relatively higher than I expected. However, this also raises the issue of the difference between knowing differences as facts and actually communicating while taking these differences into account. This will be discussed in the last chapter.

Students' verbal and non-verbal responses

Regarding questions 4-6 of the student's questionnaire, they were asked how they actually behaved when they had difficulties in expressing themselves in terms of understanding, the timing and confidence. The questions asked two aspects of their behaviour: non-verbal and verbal. These questions, especially regarding the non-verbal aspect of behaviour, are difficult to answer as they require respondents to reflect on their behaviour in specific contexts and objectively judge or assess and report their actual behaviour. Therefore, these questions were asked in the form of closed-questions. However, they are invited to state any comments when they consider that they use other strategies which are not listed there. Also, they are allowed to choose more than one strategy if they think this is the case.

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Students' question 4: If you do not understand your teachers' question or how to do the activities

given, what would you do?
5: If you need more time to think before responding, what would you do?
6: You think you know the answer, but do not have enough confidence to say it in front of the class, what do you do?

Table 7.12-(a) Non-verbal behaviour - lack of understanding

Behaviour	LE % (n=181)	LJ % (n=38)
a) I look directly at my teacher	50.1	83.4
b) I look away (look down, look up)	23.3	8.3
c) I hang my head down	20.0	8.3
d) others	6.6	0

(b) Non-verbal behaviour - need more time to think

a) I look directly at my teacher	54.1	45.4
b) I look away.	20.0	36.4
c) I hang my head down	20.8	9.1
d) others	5.1	9.1

(c) Non-verbal behaviour - lack of confidence

a) I look directly at my teacher	48.9	41.8
b) I look away	27.2	33.3
c) I hang my head down	17.8	8.3
d) others	6.1	16.6

Learners of English

Main Conclusion 14: Learners' non-verbal behaviour

One of the common phenomena among these three situations was that students they tended to send their messages through non-verbal behaviour. As far as non-verbal communication is concerned, about half of the respondents reported that they looked directly at their teacher in all three situations; when they do not understand (48.7%), when they need more time to think (54.1%) and when they do not have confidence (48.9%). On the other hand, students tended to look away more when they did not have confidence (27.2%) in comparison with the situations

when they did not understand (23.3%) or they needed time to think. About 20% of respondents in each situation stated that they keep their heads down. As for the difficulties in understanding, comments by those who chose 'others' included 'I use a laugh or a smile to hide my feeling or embarrassment', 'I look around,' 'I pretend to understand,''I look at my teacher showing a lack of understanding by putting my head on one side to make me look doubtful.' As for needing more time, their comments included, 'I use eye contact to express my need', 'I use facial expression to show 'I am thinking,'' I use fillers, saying well...', 'I use gestures showing my uncertainity.' With lack of confidence, they stated 'I use eye contact to show my hesitation,''I whisper to myself,''I use a laugh to escape from being embarrassed.

Thus, they seem to use various non-verbal cues to show their needs. However, there are occasions when they use similar behaviour in two different situations. That is , a laugh to hide their true feelings and to escape from being embarrassed are used, when they do not understand and when they do not have confidence. Therefore, except some very specific behaviour such as 'putting one's head on one side showing uncertainity or whispering as a lack of confidence, it might not be easy for teachers to distinguish their needs.

In addition, here the analysis of non-verbal behaviour is in the written form and also as a form of self-report, the actual recorded data for more detailed analysis is required. Nevertherless, students' comments which reflect their psychological state in specific situations are very valuable

Table 7.12-(b) Verbal responses - lack of understanding

Verbal-response	LE % (n=180)	LJ % (n=38)
a) I ask my teacher to repeat the question again or explain more	34.3	63.2
b) I consult with my friend	56.3	31.6
c) I keep silent	8.5	5.3

d) others	0.9	0
Verbal responses - more time to think		
a) I tell my teacher that I still need time to think	50.6	53.8
b) I do not say anything	44.3	37.1
c) others	5.1	9.1
Verbal responses - lack of confidence		
a) I say 'I don't know.'	42.0	16.7
b) I don't say anything	8.2	16.7
c) I wait for the time when my T tells me or asks me sth. More	30.3	33.3
d) I wait for the time when my T / asks the question to others	3.8	8.3
e) I do not have this problem	10.4	16.7
f) others (use of eye contact, Try to say sth., whispering, laugh	5.3	8.3

As far as verbal-behaviour is concerned, in each situation, slightly different strategies were listed for the respondents to choose according to their possibilities.

First, when they have difficulties in understanding, more than half of the respondents (LE) chose to consult with their friends. On the other hand, 34.3% of them chose to ask their teacher to repeat the question again or explain more. They seemed to solve their difficulties by working with their friends rather than directly asking teachers.

In contrast, when they needed more time to think, the highest proportion (50.6 %) of respondents chose to tell their teachers that they needed more time to think directly, while 44.3% of them chose to remain silent. There were respondents who stated all the same that they tried to say something. On the other hand, when they lack confidence, about half of them (42.0%) chose to say 'I do not know,' then 30.3% of them chose 'I wait for the time when my teacher asks me more and 3.8% of them chose 'I wait for the time when my teacher asks the question to others.

8.2% chose to be silent. It seems that a large percentage of respondents chose to say 'I do not know' to avoid feeling tense. Also, they seem to need some support from teachers to overcome this problem. Although the result of this questionnaire needs to be examined in relation to actual recorded data of students, it shows several important characteristics of Japanese students in relation to the use of silence.

Learners of Japanese

Main Conclusion 15: Learners' verbal behaviour

As far as the difficulties in understanding is concerned, as well as LE, most LJ (83.3%) commented that they looked directly at their teachers non-verbally. However, the main big difference is the way in which they responded verbally. LJ (63.2%) commented that they asked the teacher to repeat the question again or explain more while LE (56.3%) commented that they normally consult with their friends rather than directly asking questions of teachers.

However, when they need more time to think, as well as LE (54.1%), 45.4% of LJ answered that they would directly look at the teacher non-verbally and tell the teacher that they needed more time to think directly (LE 50.6%, LJ 53.8%). Furthermore, when they lack confidence, they react in a similar non-verbal manner to the Japanese students of English. Nevertheless, more respondents of LE(42.0%) chose to say 'I don't know.' than LJ (16.7%). This indicates that there are frequent occasions that LE try to withdraw, from the difficult moments in answering questions being asked rather than trying to overcome the difficult moment.

Findings are summarized as follows;

Non-verbal behaviour

Japanese learners of English:

In general, they use various non-verbal cues to send their message while remaining silent and when having difficulties in expressing themselves. Some distinctive characteristics are;

a) lack of understanding: They look at teachers directly more than the following situations, b) and c). There are occasions when they put their heads on one side to show uncertainity and use smiles to release them from being embarassed.

b) need more time to think: They tend to state their needs directly more than in other situations and use eye contact to show their needs.

c) lack of confidence: They more frequently look away than in other situations. There are occasions when they use laughing or whispering to indicate their lack of confidence.

Learners of Japanese

a) lack of understanding Similar to LE, most of them chose to look at teachers directly

b) need more time to think There were many respondents who looked away to concentrate on thinking

c) lack of confidence Non-verbal reaction by LJ shows a similar percentage as the one by LE

<u>Verbal-behaviour</u>

Japanese learners of English

a) lack of understanding: They prefer to consult with friends than directly ask teachers for clarification.

b) need more time to think They express their needs saying 'I need more time,'' I am still thinking.' more directly than when they have difficulties in understanding or lacking confidence.

c) lack of confidence: There are many students who say 'I do not know,' rather than challenging or volunteering by giving their idea. Also, there are students who are waiting for teachers' support.

Learners of Japanese

a) lackof understanding Most of them choose to ask the teacher for clarification directly

b) need more time to think Most of them tell the teacher that they need time to think

c) lack of confidence There were less respondents who tried to withdraw from the difficulties by saying 'I don't know.'

One of the points to be examined and discussed is how they send their cues. These are possible combinations of the ways of sending messages.

1)	Verbal	+	Nonverbal	+
2)	Verbal	-	Nonverbal	+
3)	Verbal	+	Nonverbal	-

There would be cases when students actually say something verbally, and directly or indirectly and also show their needs by using non-verbal cues simultaneously. Also, there would be occasions when they used only non-verbal cues.

7.3 The analysis of Part III of the questionnaires

Part III of the questionnaire is not directly comparable with the data of the use of silence in the EFL context. It attempts to find how and to what extent their cultural norms on their communicative style in the Japanese and in the English context are related to the use of silence in the EFL context.

Teachers' question 1: Which points are you careful about in conversation?

Main Conclusion 16: Points to be taken care about in talk

Question 1 attempted to examine which points they need to be careful about in conversation. Respondents are asked to provide three points in both settings; in Japanese and in English.

In the Japanese context:

A high proportion of the respondents from three groups (LE 22.1%, LJ 16.7%, JET 18.1%) put the first priority on 'clarity to make others understand appropriately.' However, the highest proportion of NJT listed 'agree first.' This indicates that the highest proportion was accepting others' ideas, while the highest proportion of NET listed use of eye contact as an important fact.

With the second priority, their choices differ. While LE chose the use of eye contact, JET

emphasized putting the importance on the use of mind-reading (*Enryo & Sasshi, Omoiyari*) and NET and NJT thought 'politeness' should be valued.

All respondents put the value of the importance of politeness highly. For LE, it was listed as the fourth most important point. This difference might derive from their age and social requirements and experiences. Another common feature is that many respondents in all the three groups pointed out that they took care not to hurt others' feelings or tried not to offend others. In addition, the importance of listening was pointed out by all three groups.

<u>In the English context:</u>

In the English context, the points which they were careful about varied. For LE, they put values on; 1) accurate use of grammar, 2) use of eye contact, 3) trying to make myself understand, 4) pronunciation. For JET, they put first priority on understanding. They also listed accuracy, selection of topic, appropriate expression, aim of talk, clarity, listening. For NET, clarity and the use of eye contact were equally highly valued. Also, the use of body language, directness and honesty were listed.

It seems that students are more conscious about the accurate use of language than mutual understanding. This may have arisen from their proficiency level and also as learners of English. Both JET and NET put more value on how to get a meanings across appropriately compared to accuracy. However, JET also put the importance on accuracy as non-native speakers of English. Learners of Japanese put the first priority on the use of gesture while NJT put the first priority on the importance of logically expressed personal opinions. They also listed 'understanding of others' as an important aspect in communication.

The Summary:

The points to be taken into account when communicating with others in the Japanese and in the English contexts slightly differed. In the Japanese context, clarity, understanding, use of eye contact, level of speech and Japanese cultural norms such as *omoiyari, enryo* were listed. On the other hand, in the English context, use of eye contact was emphasized as an important element in communicating in English. This result shows that both the Japanese and English take slightly different aspects into account in a different social contexts. It might be a reflection of actual communicative differences in each different socio cultural context.

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Teachers' question 2: During conversation in your native language, do you nod frequently? How do you interpret the role and use of nodding? (When do you nod?)

Question 2 asked whether they frequently use 'nodding=*Aizuchi*' in communication and also they were asked its functions. Judging from their responses, the frequency of the use of *Aizuchi* considerably differs between Japanese respondents (LE, JET, NJT) and English respondents (LJ, NET). In addition, their use of *Aizuchi* are motivated by slightly different reasons. That is , the degree to which they emphasize several functions of *Aizuchi* differ as follows;

Table 7.13-(a): Frequency of Aizuchi

	LE % (n=180)	LJ % (n=38)	JET % (n=38)	NET % (n=40)	NJT % (n=40)
Frequently	81.1	50.0	69.2	27.6	91.2
Often	0	0	0	9.5	0
Sometimes	0	25.0	0	14.3	0
Rarely/ hardly	0	0	0	15.3	0
No	18.9	25.0	30.8	0	5.0
If I agree	0	0	0	19.0	0
When I strongly agree	0	0	0	9.5	0
When I understand	0	0	0	4.8	3.8

Note: % is calculated according to the number of the answers given

First, frequency differs as described above. A high proportion of the Japanese respondents (LE 81%, JET 69.2%, NJT 86.2%) stated that they frequently use *Aizuchi* in communication while only 38.1% of NET chose 'Yes = frequently'. Moreover, they added some comments providing more detailed conditions when they use *Aizuchi* such as 'if I agree,''when I strongly agree.' Thus, as the result shows, the Japanese tend to use *Aizuchi* more frequently than Westerners. In addition, it is also essential for us to examine what they consider to be the function of *Aizuchi.*

All of them consider that there are several functions of *Aizuchi* such as 1) show understanding, 2) agreement, 3) continuer (acknowlegement of attention), 4) strong emotional response, 5) empathy, support towards speaker. One of the distinctive differences is with regard to the function of *Aizuchi.* The highest proportion of Japanese respondents interpreted the function of Aizuchi as showing understanding (LE 32%, JET 31.4%, NJT 20.0%), while NET primarily consider that it shows agreement (NET39.1%, LJ 35.7%).

Table 7. 13-(b) Functions of Aizuchi

	LE %	LJ %	JET %	NET %	NJT %
Show understanding	38	28.8	35.8	21.7	26.6
Agreement	31	35.7	15.7	43.6	23.3
Continuer (listening)	19	0	28.8	15.2	20.0
Strong emotional response	8	21.4	10.5	4.3	0
Empathy, support towards Speaker	4	14.3	9.2	15.2	30.0

Moreover, it seems that NETs emphasize using *Aizuchi* only when they strongly feel the need to use it and listed some situations in which they use it.

. When I strongly agree
. If I agree
. When I feel the person needs great understanding or sympathy

On the other hand, the Japanese respondents listed various functions from both positive and negative perspectives. Regarding the positive use of *Aizuchi*, they listed several functions:

. To keep good tempo in conversation
. For mutual understanding
. To check whether communication goes smoothly
. While thinking
. Use as a response instead of using words.
. It is a rhythm of conversation.
. I use it to avoid conflict.

Furthermore, there are respondents who considered its function from a discoursal perspective and state;

. I use it when my eyes meet others.
. I regard it as a unit in interaction
. It is a matter of timing.

Interestingly, some respondents referred to the negative aspect of the use of Aizuchi.

. When I am not interested in the topic, I use it.
. When I am bored, I use it.
. When I pretend to participate and am just hearing but not listening
. I speed up if it is not interesting.

Likewise, they use *Aizuchi*, not only to show interest but also to compensate for their lack of interest or lack of concentration in order to make the conversation go smoothly on the surface. Furthermore, three respondents stated that they used *Aizuchi* more frequently when they communicate with older people, with someone who is senior and also in the first encounter. That is, they use it more frequently when they feel psychological distance with the other participant. Likewise, the Japanese seem to use non-verbal cues for various reasons.

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Question 3: When do you keep silent in conversation?
4: When is it polite and when is it impolite to be silent in conversation?
5: Do you feel uncomfortable if there is a period of silence during the conversation? If so, specify the situation. And is there any occasion when you appreciate the existence of silence?

Question 3-5 of the student's questionnaire and question 5-7 of the teacher's questionnaire asked

the same questions about the use of silence in communication; 1) when they keep silent, 2) when it is polite and impolite to be silent, 3) when they feel uncomfortable with the existence of silence or when they appreciate the existence of silence. Respondents were asked to answer the questions above both in the Japanese and in the English contexts.

Question 3 and Question 5 attempted to examine when they keep silent in conversation. One of the answers which was pointed out by a high proportion of the respondents in the Japanese context was 'silence as a thinking time' which showed the second highest proportion. Further, the high proportion of both JET and NET pointed out 'silence as listening'. There are other functions of silences which are identical among three groups and it includes, 'disagreement,' 'angry','unfamiliar/uncommon topic','in a bad mood','have something to say but it might offend the other person' and 'show respect'.

The most distinctive difference among them was that many Japanese respondents (especially LE) use silence as a 'difficulty-avoidance strategy for themselves and for others.' For example, they listed the following situations,'when it is inconvenient to me',' when I started psychological distance with my interlocuters', ' when I feel psychological distance with the other participant (e.g.in the first encounter, with someone who is not close to me)' and 'when I regret after saying something bad,''when I was asked difficult questions to answer,''when the others get confused.'

On the one hand, in an English speaking situation, there are some differences between Japanese respondents and English respondents. First, JETs listed 'silence to change the topic (14.7%)'. On the other hand, although some English respondents also stated this aspect as one of the functions of silence, very few respondents said this (1.7%) compared to Japanese

respondents.

Second, all three groups of respondents listed 'silence as a thinking time and listening time ' at a high rate, while more English respondents listed silence as listening time (27.1%) than thinking time (11.9%). Japanese respondents (JET) listed those two items at an equal rate. Most Japanese respondents (LE) listed either linguistic problems as a reason for being silent in the English context or 'silence as a thinking time.' Lack of proficiency seems to have increased the salience of learner characteristics in this case.

In Questions 4 and 7, the respondents were asked to specify the situations in which they think that the existence or use of silence is polite and required, an impolite and to be avoided. In the Japanese context, they commented slightly differently. The common features of comments by the Japanese respondents (JS, JET) are 'while I am listening to others and try to understand him or her.' And 'while I am thinking.' However, some differences can be seen in their other comments. For example, while teachers referred to the situation when communicating with older people, students have not mentioned this point. Instead, they listed more specific situational contexts. These include situations such as, 'in class or in meeting,''in public','at funeral,''in library.'

They have chosen rather formal settings in public. In addition, they listed several items which make them feel the need to be silent. They listed several points which refer to the other participant, including 'when somebody looks sad or hurt','in a sad mood,'' when somebody is angry,' 'when somebody is in a difficult situation.' On the other hand, English respondents listed some culturally specific items, including 'when question is not directed at you,''when the group does not share my view,''in a group-in the presence of others.' It seems that they more objectively see the use of silence as politeness in the Japanese context.

Important points on living in Japan

Teachers' questionnaire: If your friend asks you the important points on living in Japan, what would you tell him or her?

Teachers were asked to give important points about living in Japan. Regarding respondents were both Native Japanese speaker (JET, NJT) and NET, and felt there were two significant points which are considered crucial on living in Japan. These points are summarised as follows;

1) Communication in Japanese context requires people to take their relationships with others into account.
2) Living with ambiguous communication signals.

Regarding the first point, there are some comments relating to this cultural aspect, collectivism.

NET

. For the Japanese, the group context is more important than their own feeling.
. Do not impose yourself on others
. Minimise assertiveness.

NJT

. Never do anything first. Wait until you understand a situation before joining or wait for an invitation.

JET

. When you want to say an opposite opinion, show that you accept the other person's opinion first and then go on to make your point.
. Try to understand what the other people think.
. Try to think if the other person has finished everything she or he wanted to say before you take the turn to talk.

As far as the second point is concerned, there are comments as follows;

NET

. Learn to live with ambiguity
. Remember that the Japanese have two faces (*tatemae*) the one they show, (*honne*) the one they do not.
. The Japanese find it easier to say what they think they are expected to say than what they themselves think.

JET

. Avoid direct criticism.
. Many Japanese do not show their feeling directly towards those who are not close friends.
. You may not have to use ambigous expression but try to understand what has been meant.
. Avoid being direct.

This chapter has described the result from the survey. It only depicts some socio-cultural aspects in Japan. However, this shows that from both the native and non-native speakers' points of view, the relationship with others and the use of ambiguity were listed as important aspects to be aware of Japanese communication. This appears to be parallel to the classroom behaviour of learners of Japanese. That is, this might indicate that these two aspects are a strong cultural norms in Japan, a social mirrors of Japanese society.

Chapter 8 Data analysis

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I attempt to understand the use of silence by Japanese learners of English in Japan by looking at the video-recorded data of classroom interaction between the Western teacher, and students in an EFL context in Japan. As well as understanding students' linguistic and psychological problems, here the focus will be upon the analysis of data from an ethnographic point of view. That is, the causes for being silent, and the degree to which these are culturally determined, will be investigated by interpreting use of silence and non-verbal behaviour.

In order to find out the distinct or very subtle differences of the use of silence between Western and Japanese contexts, the use of silence by Western people in the Japanese class was also observed and analysed. This analysis also intends to understand how people in different cultural contexts value the use of silence in relation to their own culture and in others' cultural context. Cortazzi and Jin (1996) comment on the relationship between culture and language learning as follows;

> By the term 'culture of learning', we mean that much behaviour in language classrooms is set within taken-for-granted frameworks of expectations, attitudes, values and beliefs about what constitutes good learning, about how to teach or learn, whether and how to ask questions, what textbooks are for, and how language teaching relates to broader issues of the nature and purpose of education. In many classrooms , both teachers and learners are unaware that such a culture of learning may be influencing the process of teaching and learning. (Cortazzi and Jin 1996: 169)

This chapter, therefore, focuses on analysing cultural uses of silence in foreign language learning both in Japanese and in Western contexts. In this present study, I examine this topic on the evidence of the recorded-video data and statements collected from students, teachers and

Japanese and English informants.Thus, this chapter consists of 1) understanding the use of silence by Japanese learners of English in an EFL context, 2) understanding the use of silence by learners of Japanese (British students) in Japanese classes, 3) finding out both common features and differences in the use of silence in language learning, and 4) seeking a possible, effective solution or strategy which would help learners to express themselves confidently.

8.2 Data Collection

English class in Japan: the background context

This present study was conducted at a Junior college in Japan in June, 1996. It was two months after the academic year in Japan had begun. After several observations, a lesson which has relatively long uses of silence by students, was selected for analysis. There were 16 female undergraduate students in their first year of college, aged 18 or 19. This English conversation class had been taught by a very experienced native American teacher once a week (37 years teaching experience to Japanese students). He is a proficient speaker of Japanese. English is the medium of instruction for lessons, however, the teacher sometimes uses Japanese, mainly for making the meaning of new vocabulary clear, or make students relax by using familiar sounds for them. According to him and also from my observation, this class was very quiet in terms of the amount of time spent on verbal interaction and students' reactions. The teacher regards students' proficiency in reading and writing as intermediate but in speaking he regards them as beginners. They are seated in the Japanese traditional manner, facing the teacher and blackboard which makes it difficult for them to interact with each other and thus creates a sense of distance between the teacher and students.

Another important point to be mentioned here is the methods used regularly in this class. For the first half of the lesson, students are given a text written in English and asked to translate it

into Japanese and for the latter half, they interact with the teacher individually by using the key sentences learned in translation. Since the teacher addresses the individual at random, they are not required to initiate interaction in class.

Research Procedure

In this study, I videotaped the class and asked students to write whether or not they had difficulties in expressing themselves in that lesson, providing three specific questions in Japanese:

Were there any occasions you remained silent because of:
1) lack of understanding.
2) lack of time
3) lack of confidence

They were also asked to state the frequency of the difficulties described above and how they solved those problems. They scribbled their experiences at the end of the lesson. This written feedback was attempted since it allows learners' depth of feeling to be expressed (Sturman 1996, Tsui 1996).

After the observation, two particular scenes were selected for the analysis. As well as the students' and the teacher's feedback and the researcher's observation and interpretation, the video was shown to Western and Japanese informants in the U.K. This was done in order to explore how people from different cultural backgrounds perceive the use of silence in their own and in other cultures. If there is any gap in the interpretation of silence, differences need to be understood in order to make cross-cultural communication more successful. 36 informants in higher education were selected from each group (18 Japanese -native speaker and 18 English native speaker). They watched two scenes from an English class in Japan and also two scenes from a Japanese lesson in London and were required to write down how they interpreted students' use of silence in each context. An interview of approximately 30 minutes was

conducted to discuss the topic in detail and also to exchange ideas on relevant issues. The The interviews were conducted both individually and in the group. However, there was one case in which a Japanese informant and an English informant attended the interview together and exchanged their ideas.

8.3 Data Analysis: Japanse learners of English

Student A

The situation: A native English teacher asks the student to give an example of '.....is the best way of .....ing.' The student is, therefore, supposed to give an example of the key sentence whose meaning and function had already been learned in class.
Here, the teacher is trying to elicit an answer in a complete sentence by providing an example.

Transcription 1: English class - A

.....

0:03 T: So, another three examples of ....is the best way of ...., Miss Shoji.
S: [Silence 7".89]
(She hangs her head down and looks blank, complete absence of facial expression.)
0:11 T: Eating icecream is the best way of what?
S: [Silence 11".62]
(She looks down but looks at the teacher when the teacher started saying something.)
0:26 T: Eating icecream is the best way, to beat the heat, to beat the heat.
0:37 Do you know what I mean? To beat somebody. *Uchitaosu, ne.*
0:43 Heat. *Nan desu ka? Atsusa. (What is it? The heat.)*
0:49 *Atsusani tatakau tameni wa aisukurimu o taberu.*
0:54 *Ichiban ii houhou desu ne.* Do you agree with that sentence?
1:00 Do you agree? Eating icecream is the best way of beating the heat?
S: [Silence 4".12]
(She slightly looks away.)
1:11 T: Yes, sir. No, sir. I don't know. Three options. Yes, No, or I don't know.
S: [Silence 3".67]
1:20 I don't know.
(She slightly smiles.)
1:22 T: I don't know. Look at this. I don't know. What is the best way then?
1:29 To beat the heat, what is the best way?
1:37 The best way to beat the heat is.....? What is the best way, then?
S: [Silence 52. 77]
(She hangs her head down.)
1:47 T: What do..? Buun.. What do you call this?
1:52 The best way to beat the heat is...?
2:00 S: [Silence 7".21] (She is looking at the teacher.)
2:07 T: The best way to beat the heat, ...is the air conditioner. Nn?
Maybe in *Katakana,* that's the way they do.
2:25 The best way to beat the heat is, ti ku, the best way to beat the heat is air conditioner.
Kuura. You see. *Kuura.* There are many ways of beating the heat.

We will have something to think of what to do in hot , hot summer days.
What is the best thing to do.
Now let us come back to our topic.

.....

Katakana= The second syllabary used primarily for foreign names and places and words of foreign origin.

The informants are required to describe what is happening and how they interpret the use of silence by the students. After the analysis of their comments, it could be found that there were both common views and different interpretations of the students' uses of silence.

<u>The first impression and the teacher's teaching style</u>

The impression expressed by Japanese informants and English informants differed. Most English informants had the impression that the interaction itself, and learning was very slow with a tense atmosphere, and only the teacher was talking with no student volunteering. On the other hand, there were Japanese informants who commented on the cultural differences between the teacher's teaching method and the Japanese culture in the class.

. There is a cultural gap between the teacher and the student.
Students seem to regard the teacher as a foreigner. (JI 5)

. I think his method is striking / conspicuous in Japanese culture.
There is nothing which is filling this gap. The atmosphere, seating arrangement, students'readiness, expectation and learning style remain the same in traditional Japanese manner. Only his method is Western. I also wonder whether it is a good idea or not for the student to be focused individually by the teacher in that way....she might feel more pressure.
(JI 11)

Like this, the first impression which both Japanese informants (JI) and English informants (EI) had was prominently different. However, there was a point at which most of the JI and EI agreed upon, which was that the fact that the teachers' teaching style/ manner was rather aggressive.This is because he does not give enough opportunity or time to the students to respond by continuously asking questions and explaining without student feedback. There are some

comments as follows;

Japanese Informants

. She might be feeling that the teacher's style is agressive..... (JI 8)
. He keeps talking and does not check whether she understood or not. (JI 10)

English Informants

. The teacher is talking all the time. (EI 5)
. He is too aggressive / forceful. (EI 11)
. The teacher is never silent, maybe if he was quiet for a moment, the student would say something (EI 15)

Thus, the impression which they had about the teacher's teaching style was more or less the same and they thought his approach might have been a cause for the students' long silence.

Description of student A

For the description of what is going on, there were also common comments and different opinions from JI and EI. The common description is;

> The student is listening to the teacher asking the question and explaining carefully. The teacher is standing in front of her very closely, using gestures continuously with a loud voice. However, she keeps silent with a completely blank facial expression and it gives the impression that she is passive and not involved in the interaction. When she was given three options, she said 'I don't know' and smiled slightly with relief. In general, very little reaction is given verbally and non-verbally and she is looking down most of the time or looking in the distance but does not look at the teacher.

In addition to this common description, JI and EI observe this scene with slightly different interests.

Japanese Informants

. Everyone averts their gaze from time to time.

English Informants

. No eye contact.
. The student does not respond, other students don't want to help.
. The student seems to pretend that the teacher has not asked her anything.

What is interesting to look at here is that the aspects which JI and EI observe differ in some way. JI pay attention to looking at other students' reactions while EI pay attention to the use of eye contact or other students' willingness to participate, and the student's pretentious behaviour because of her lack of reaction. These differences will be discussed in the following section in

relation to the interpretation the informants gave.

Interpretation of the use of silence

There were variable interpretations of her use of silence in this context. I analysed informants comments from linguistic, psychological and cultural points of view.

As far as the linguistic dimension is concerned, the central issue among the informants was whether the student understood what the teacher was asking and what was required. This is an extract from the interview among a JI, an EI and the researcher (myself).

[Extract 1 - informant]
R: Do you think she understood what is being said?
EI: I think she understood him. I think he was being quite aggressive.
He has just holds his tone, his own method. He is quite forceful.
JI: I don't know really [whether she understood or not.]
EI: Because he is asking questions and she answered.
(The answer indicates 'I don't know.')

In this conversation, the EI regards the fact that the student finally answered as showing understanding. This is logical since answers presuppose understanding. However, there is also a fact that Japanese students use 'I don't know' or monosyllabic words to escape from tense moments when required to express their opinion, whether they understand or not. In terms of understanding, four different opinions were offered by informants. Informants were allowed to give more than one interpretation. Then, their statements were divided into 4 categories and a percentage was calculated according to the total number of comments given by them.

Table 8.1 Interpretation on the use of silence - Understanding- student A

	JI % (n=23)	EI % (n=21)
1. Maybe she understands what the teacher is saying although		

she might not understand 100%. She smiled and nodded.	21.4%	11.1%
2. She didn't understand at the beginning, so she kept silent.	42.9%	44.4%
3. She wanted to hide the fact that she didn't understand so she looked blank.	14.3%	11.1%
4. It is not clear whether she understood or not since she gives no sign of understanding.	21.4%	33.3%

Note: % is calculated based on the number of opinions on understanding.

From a psychological point of view, another six interpretations were given as follows.

Table 8.2 Interpretation on the use of silence - psychological state - student A

	JI % (n=23)	EI %(n=21)
1. She lacked confidence or was embarrassed at being the sudden focus of the teacher's individual attention. So, she feels shy because of her English and others' reactions	24.1%	39.9%
2. She is so nervous because of the teacher's aggressiveness and does not know what to do.	23.1%	33.3%
3. She was trying to escape from the moment by saying 'I don't know.'	11.5%	6.6%
4. She is thinking and can't find any good answer or digest or understand what the teacher is saying.	19.2%	13.3%
5. She is self-conscious because of the camera.	7.7%	0%
6. She is shy (her personality).	7.7%	6.6%

Note: % is calculated based on the number of opinions on psychological state.

The fact that she was on the spot in front of the class and being asked questions continuously by the teacher, in a rather aggressive manner led informants to believe the way under psychological pressure. Finally, in terms of the cultural point of view, it is important to see different interpretations between the JI and EI.

The following is a conversation during the interview.

[Extract 2 - informant-]
R: Do you think she is rude since she does not say anything?
EI: Do I think she is rude? Yes.
JI: *Aa so?* (Do you?)
EI: Don't you? He is asking some questions and she doesn't reply.
JI: But she is not comfortable to answer.
EI: No, even this is any sort of answer, it doesn't matter. If you are in a college learning something and you know the teacher is there. He is supposed to be teaching you, supposed to have some feedback.
R: Do you think she should.....?
EI: Oh, yeah, if she doesn't understand she should say so. She should ask questions about questions are about what.
R: What do you think, why does she look blank?
EI: I have no idea. Beyond me.
JI: All students didn't look at her but were listening what she's going to say, especially in English.
EI: If you are comparing with English students, if the teacher asks questions, everyone should answer. If you are ....
JI: If you are silent, more pressure in England. Silence is more pressure.
EI: Yeah, probably. That's why I can't understand why she can't say anything. The teacher must be very frustrated

As this EI points out, being silent in an English context is interpreted as being rude. Two other EI also gave a similar comment. Furthermore, there are some remarkably distinct differences in interpretation of silence as follows;

Japanese informants	English informants
. She doesn't want to stand out. . She expects that the teacher shifts his attention to other students or gives up by keeping silent. . She is waiting for the teacher's help. . She keeps silent since she thinks she can't get through this situation by herself. . She wants the teacher to understand that she doesn't understand even without saying it. *(Ishin denshin)*	. She finds it (teaching or topic) boring. . She is rude since she doesn't answer. . She is uninterested. . She appears to have no confidence and hopes that if she does not answer, the teacher will leave her alone. Also, she appears lazy as she does not try to understand and when she finally answers, she says, 'I don't know.' = easy option. . They appear not to single themselves out of the group of their own accord.

Student B

The situation; The student is required to give her own opinion about the following question. 'What do you do when somebody offers you a very very expensive present?

Transcription 2 - The use of silence in English class - student B-

.....

2:58 T: This is a question for you. You have to answer to me, Miss Sasano. One day, you are dating with *Jinzaburo* (Japanese name). So, and Jinzaburo one day comes with a present. Right. *Yukako, nani mo naikeredomo....*
(Yukako, I have nothing special, but....)
3:26 You open the gift, a Swill made watch, 15*man* (150000 yen). What do you do? What do you do?
3:50 Do you take the present? Ah, ...shall I take this wwatch? Ah,..do you do that?
4:17 This is a question for you. What do you do when somebody offers you a very very expensive present? Nn?
S: [Silence 9".98]
(She looks at the teacher briefly and then looks away and hangs her head down.)
4:33 T: What do you do?
4:36 S: [Silence 6"'61] I resign.
4:40 T: 'I resign,' she said. I will not accept it. You can tell him anytime. 'I am very Sorry, I'm very sorry , Jinza. I cannot accept it, Jinza, sorry... This is.. This is too much for me. Why? Why/
5:04 Can you tell me the reason why?
S: [Silence 4".08]
(She puts her left hand to her neck and looks away while listening and glances up.)
5:10 T: Well, the reason is psychological reason. If you accept this very very expensive present, this present will enslave you. It is going to be like a chain for you.

.....

<u>The Description of student B</u>

In comparison to the description of student A, there was not any distinctive difference in the description of student B between JI and EI except some minor points such as self consciousness from the existence of the camera. In summary, the description of student B is as follows:

In comparison with student A, student B seems to be more interested and involved in communication with the teacher. Her smile can have two meanings. One is that she is enjoying the teacher's performance and the other possible meaning is that her smile shows her nervousness. Also, she laughs with her hand over her mouth, slightly shrugging and giggles a lot, looking up from under eyelids touching her hair and eye and holding the chair tightly. On the other hand, the teacher's teaching style remains the same, continuously talking

> and so does not give her much chance to answer. But, finally she responded quietly although she could not extend her idea.

From this description, it is clear that her reaction is easier to understand than the one by student A. This is because she finally answered her own idea even though it was wrongly expressed lexically and her non-verbal behaviour shows her involvement.

The interpretation of the use of silence by student B
The teacher's teaching style

In the cases of both students A and B, the JI and EI pointed out that the teacher tended to carry on talking and ended up answering his own questions and did not give them much opportunity to answer. This was true from the observation of their interaction. After the student answered, 'I resign' wrongly, intending to say 'I will refuse it', the teacher asked the reason. However, as she didn't reply immediately, he continued to explain the reason from his point of veiw, but has not tried to elicit the answer from the student. He could have tried to elicit the answer from the student. He could have asked her more closed questions by giving examples or could have checked her understanding or asked her opinion after giving his view.

The student's understanding and her use of silence

As far as the student's understanding is concerned, most of the informants (both JI and EI) agreed that she understands what is being asked and what he is talking about and she is thinking how to answer in English, or still thinking what to say while remaining silent. However, two EI thought that she might not understand since she remained silent for a while.

Psychological anxiety and silence

Some informants pointed out that the reasons for being silent could be a psychological problem such as anxiety about being wrong or being foolish, and psychological pressure from being

focused on individually in public. This is because all eyes are on her. Eight out of 18 EI pointed this out as a main reason since her smile shows nervousness.

Cultural reasons for being silent

Culturally rooted reasons for remaining silent were slightly varied. Two different opinions given by EI are as follows;

1) She does not have her own opinion, so she keeps silent.
2) She appears to be asking for more time in keeping silent, however, there still seems to be a link between the teacher and herself.

Another slightly different interpretation concerns 'the peer pressure' which she might get if she gives her opinion.

[Extract 3 - informant-]

R: Why did she keep silent?
EI: I put down peer pressure because the question was a quite an issue. It wasn't about English, about a general issue about someone accepting a gift and so she was very cautious. Still she was thinking but she was thinking several things.
R: So, do you think she had her own idea?
EI: Yes.
R: So, do you think she felt embarrassed by others?
EI: Yes, they might disagree.

Thus, only one EI pointed this out while five JI referred to this fact. Two of them commented that she could have given her own personal opinion if she had tried but was afraid of doing so because her answer might reflect her way of life or attitude, and the tough nature of the topic itself meant it was difficult to allow expressing her own idea in class.

From the informants' comments, it can be seen that the interpretations of the use of silence by Japanese learners of English varied when JI and EI watched the video. While JI interpreted its origin as cultural, there were EI who interpreted it negatively. This was especially the case with

the first student who is very quiet and gives very little reaction. Indeed, here the mismatch of the interpretation increased more. Now, I will look at the participants' (the teacher and the two students) interpretations and intentions, discuss how far students' intentions in keeping silent was correctly understood or not, and find out what the problems were.

The teacher's interpretation of silence and the students' intention
The teacher's interpretation

I interviewed the teacher orally and asked him to answer the questionnaire on the use

of silence by Japanese learners of English in general, and how he perceived those students.

Q1: Do you feel Japanese students are rather shy or quiet?
A1: Yes, it is a national character and somehow a method followed in their educational system, I think.

Q2: Do you feel uncomfortable if your students do not answer your questions immediately?
A2: I got accustomed now.

Q3: When you teach English to Japanese students, do you take extra care to take cultural differences into account?
A3: Not always, but I do, to compare, to understand better my students, to try to see where their difficulties to learn come from. I am also trying to re-orient the students in the concept of what languages are as vehicles of communication, to work hard to break the Japanese psychology; 'Don't talk, if not asked to.' 'To be in class is enough.'

Q4: Why do you address them individually?
A4: I address them personally to get their response.

Q5: What do you think about the silence created by those two students in your class?
A5: I interpret it as the lack of initiative to ask questions or take part in the class and the incredible passivity of only being there. So, I tried to give them familiar examples.

From his comments, it is clear that students' silences are socio-cultural. He knows students' difficulties and some strategies for getting responses from them. (eg. addressing them personally and using the grammar-translation method in a part of the lesson.)

He also realized that students need to be trained as learners and communicators in English and

he is working hard on it. However, his interpretation is quite severe. Due to his long experience of teaching Japanese students, and his understanding and enthusiasm in teaching, I assume that the classroom atmosphere would be changed if some more action, or the negotiation between the teacher and the students took place. What is required to realize this?

This also raises the issue of the difference between knowing cultural differences and doing something to fill the gap. I will come back to this point later.

The students' intention
Student A

From the scribble sheet she wrote, she expressed how frequently she had difficulties in expressing herself in that lesson. For three different cases; 1) lack of understanding, 2) lack of time to think, 3) lack of confidence, she chose 'sometimes' from the closed questions. For the particular moment she kept silent, she commented that she was thinking again and again about what he was talking about and she wanted time to think more but kept silent. Also, she was not confident enough to say something and she wanted him to speak a bit more slowly when he spoke in English.

From her comment, the teacher's relatively fast paced talking was one of the difficulties which made her keep silent from the beginning, and she could not follow what he was saying. Therefore, she needed more time to digest. Thus, as the informants observed, her understanding was not 100% from the beginning, and she needed more space between questions and answers. While she was still thinking, the teacher had already ended. It is possible that his style (fast talk without checking her understanding) caused her silence. However, from the teacher's point of view, it is really hard to read her mind when she kept silent with a blank facial expression and very little movement. What would the solution be then? Would she be more talkative if he slowed down?

Student B

Student B also chose 'sometimes' which expresses the frequency of difficulties she had in the lesson. In comparison with student A, she more objectively analysed her difficulties. She is constantly nervous when she has to express her opinion. Therefore, even when she had her own ideas, she kept silent. Referring to the specific question asked by the teacher, 'If somebody offers you a very, very expensive present, what would you do?, she commented as follows; 'When I was asked a question, actually I wanted to say that I will return it to him as it seems doubtful, but I didn't have enough confidence to say so because I was in front of the class, so I waited for another question to be asked by my teacher. Also, afterwards I was asked 'Why?' but, since I couldn't listen properly and couldn't understand what the teacher was saying, I kept silent.'

From her comments, we understand that she remained silent for three different reasons. At the beginning, she was nervous, then, after being questioned, she kept silent in spite of the fact that she had her own idea. This was because she was conscious of others' reactions and so she had difficulty in listening. Both students objectively analysed what happened to them. As for student A, it was not clear why she showed a blank facial expression and it is hard to know what she was thinking. However, this blank expression itself might be her own personality and a way of showing lack of confidence and that she was asking for more time or showing a lack of confidence.

Student B's analysis showed that she did not express her opinion for cultural reasons.

These are only two examples of students' use of silence in a Japanese EFL context.

However, these findings shows that students' and teachers' knowledge of different opinions helps us to understand our own teaching circumstances better. In the last Chapter, I shall discuss some pedagogical implications based on these findings.

Summary

From the observation of the two students in the EFL class, several interpretations of silence were given, which could be caused by the teacher's Western pedagogical outlook. Possible interpretations were students' psychological fears of expressing themselves, and fear of being wrong, lack of understanding and culturally different values on the use of silence in interaction in class. Having known why those students kept silent, the effect of collectivism and *Wa* (harmony) in a social context prevented them from expressing themselves. In addition, the characteristics of their communicative style was to use silence as a code, or medium for conveying their message or psychological state.

Scollon and Scollon (1995) claim that this kind of silent communication was influenced by Buddhism. The tradition of communication without language which the Japanese call *Ishin denshin* might be translated as 'direct transmission' and has been strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism. It is believed that the most important thing cannot be communicated in language, that language is only useful for somewhat secondary or trivial messages (Scollon and Scollon 1995: 139).

In this EFL context, their silence had a variety of meanings and they might have wished the teacher to read their minds as several JI commented, even though the students did not give a verbal reply. Their non-verbal behaviour such as blank-facial expression, lack of eye contact, and hand and head movements conveyed certain messages. It is also a matter of personality. Student A used completly blank facial expressions unconsciously. This was her way of reacting to the difficult moment while student B reacted with more smile-gestures. Thus, the use of silence itself, and the observation of non-verbal behaviour gives some clue for the teacher

for knowing how to help students and how to read their minds.

Another important point is to know individual students' characteristics and learning style. For example, it relates to the waiting time in eliciting responses from the student. If the student is too shy, longer waiting times might put greater pressure upon them in a Japanese context where students are more likely to be conscious of others' reactions. On the other hand, there might be students who are waiting for the teacher to allocate turns individually, since claiming the turn by themselves is not expected behaviour in Japanese educational contexts.

During the informants' video-viewing session, an interesting and important issue was raised on the use of silence in relation to gender differences, which was discussed in Chapter 3. Referring to their own experience, two male informants and three female informants commented on how they used silence in language learning. The common comments from male learners was that they remained silent because of linguistic problems, such as not remembering vocabulary or structures themselves, and not because of psychological pressure.

One male informant also commented that the value he placed on talk had changed one month after he started learning English in England. According to him, at the beginning he was in a similar situation to those two students and was trying to respond after thinking that it is shameful to make mistakes. This relates to the cultural value in Japan of *Haji no bunka* (Culture of shame). But time passed, his understanding increased, and he found himself changed. He said that he got accustomed to the Western way of interaction.

On the contrary, three female Japanese informants' comments differed from the ones given by male informants. One informant referred to her own experience of learning French in France, which she has just experienced for the last one month. She felt frustrated as the teacher did not

wait while she was thinking and moved on to another student. She expected the teacher to understand that she was thinking while she kept silent, but not because of a lack of understanding. She said that she needed *ma* (interval) before she responded.

She also added, 'Later, I still had occasions of being silent but it was shortened. However, in my mind, my desire to respond in complete and appropriate sentences has not changed.' The other two female informants have native-like proficiency since their length of stay abroad had been more than over 10 years since their childhood. Their comments were as follows;

> JI1: At the beginning of my stay at the International School in Hong Kong, partly because of my character, I didn't volounteer to offer my idea to the class. I was always waiting to be addressed and one to one interaction with the teacher was O.K. Then I came to England after three years stay in Hong Kong, I also could talk with the teacher in class and now I can communicate smoothly but when I am surrounded by all native speakers, it is very difficult to communicate successfully since I feel that my pronunciation or tone obviously differs from them.
>
> JI2: I was in the States from three to eight years old and I remember that I was communicating actively and was saying anything which came to my mind. But, returning to Japan, once I accustomed to the Japanese education system, I felt that it is better not to say anything even if I have my own idea. I thought maybe my friends find me strange if I keep telling my idea and also I felt that I should not make mistakes from the atmosphere. It made me conscious with my opinion and whether my idea is same with others or not. This mentality still remains same now. Even after three years stay here in U.K., I still want to think properly before uttering any words.

Furthermore, a British English teacher currently teaching in Japan commented on gender differences, ' All students are not same, some are very reticent no matter what you do. If you try to get that one student, usually she, sometimes he....'

From their comments, as some female informants pointed out , gender differences might be deeply related to students' use of silence. The use of silence by a female might also come from the traditional or universal image of women as being modest, quiet participants in public. Also,

there was another issue. One JI commented, 'If the teacher was female in this particular class (all female students), the atmosphere would be changed and would become more soft since that situation provides something in common as female'.

Another EI commented that you feel more comfortable with someone who is close to your age and more sharing. " It doesn't have to be somebody your age but someone who relates to you. It does not matter how old. Some old people still understand and relate to you." As these informants point out, in terms of similar backgroud, would it be more effective or comfortable for students to learn if they have somebody who relates to them maximumly? Then, someone who is close to their age and of Japanese nationality is better? However, as a JI pointed out, they might feel easier with that situation since they can use Japanese in case they have difficulties, but they can not be serious.

Thus, some sort of sharing can be an encouraging element in creating a sense of safety and comfort. However, it might not always be directly related to effective language learning. There are many and complicated implications on this matter. Shifting to the teaching method then, are Western teachers required to completely adjust their teaching style to Japanese students? But, what would happen if the students go outside class? Then, should students change their learning style to the Western way? The key point and a crucial issue, is how the negotiation between two different elements from different cultural contexts take place.

8.4 Data Analysis: learners of Japanese

The observation and the video-recording were conducted at a language school (adult education) in London. The subjects were eight intermediate learners of Japanese (four female and four male students), aged in their twenties. One female student was originally from Hong Kong but

was brought up here in England and the rest of them were British. This class was recorded two months after they started learning Japanese with the teacher (the researcher myself). The classroom atmosphere was lively, partly because of the small number of students and the seating arrangement.

They sat facing each other around the circled table. Mostly, the communicative method which aims at facilitating learners' active interaction was adopted in teaching. Their reaction is spontaneous and positive.

Student A

The situation; After the new grammatical expression (*naritakatta desu* - past tense of *naritai desu*- want to become ...), the students were asked what they wanted to become when they were children. The student in focus is student number 3.

Transcription 3 - Japanese lesson - student A

6:36	T: *Jya, Sonia san wa chiisai toki, nan ni naritakkata desu ka?*	Well, what did you want to become, Sonia?
6:40	S1:*Keikan.*	Policeman.
6:41	T: *Keikan? Sonia san wa keikan ni naritakkata desu. Alisu san wa?*	Policeman? Sonia wanted to become a policeman. How about Alice?
6:44	S2: *Ano, baree dansaa.*	Well, a ballet dancer.
6:46	T: *Aa, dansaa ni naritakkata desu ka? Jya, baree o naraimashita ka?*	Ah, you wanted to become a ballet dancer. Then, you learned ballet?
6:50	S2: *Hai.*	Yes.
6:51	T: *Joe san wa?*	How about Joe?
6:54	S3: *Aa, yuumeina sakkaa preiyaa.*	Ah, a famous soccer player.
6:56	T: *....ni?.....ni ? naritakkata desu.*	.....wanted to become.
7:00	S3: *Naritakatta...* [silence - 6.1']	.....wanted to become.....
7:06	What did I want to become?	What did I want to become?

The description of student A

The student was silent and looking a little confused and puzzled , scratching his head when he was asked for a sentence in the complete form.
He also appeared to be looking for an answer while looking at the blackboard and fiddling with his fingers and folding his arms.

Interpretation of the use of silence: student A

In comparison with the interpretation of silence by Japanese learners of English, the use of silence by learners of Japanese was interpreted similarly between JI and EI, in terms of its understanding, psychological state and cultural reasons. The result is as follows;

	EI (N=22)	JI (n=17)
. didn't understand the key structure and was trying to understand (silence shows lack of understanding.)	43.7%	64.7%
. didn't expect to say in a full sentence.	6.3%	17.6%
. was waiting for the teacher to explain to him.	12.5%	0%
. self-consciousness, pretending to understand	3.1%	0%
. Peer pressure	3.1%	0%
. Positive silence: not conscious with others, silence for real thinking, appears not stressful to express himself.	0%	17.6%

Table 8.3 The interpretation on the use of silence by a learner of Japanese -A

As the table shows, both EI and JI interpret his use of silence as being because of his lack of understanding of the target structure and some informants regarded it as being because of lack of awareness that they were required to use full sentences. This is because the previous two students answered in words. Some EI pointed out that he was waiting for the teacher to provide an explanation with regard to more psychological reasons, 3.1% of EI pointed out 'self-consciousness and peer pressure.' On the contrary, JI regarded it as a positive silence showing his positive attitude for understanding and participation.

This is because his continuous eye contact or other non-verbal behaviour creates a sense of positiveness. Also, JI commented that his silence is different from the silence created by Japanese students in an EFL context since the meaning of silence is clear and it shows what he is thinking. Thus, although the informants' interpretations slightly varied, in comparison with

the instance of Japanese learners of English, the meaning conveyed was much clearer. The distinctive difference is that his silence was interpreted positively by JI as a willingness to learn.

The description of student B

The black-shirted student asks student B a question with a mistake in the usage of *dounarimashita ka* (how was it changed?), the student pauses after being asked and failed to answer and also asks the teacher for clarification by turning around towards the blackboard. He looked slightly relaxed after the teacher's explanation. Then, after the teacher asks a question in a correct form and asks another question to elicit a word, he tries to remember the word in an appropriate form, putting his hand over his face, waving his hands around and looking over his shoulder to the teacher.

The interpretation of student B

The situation; After practising how to use adjectival endings '*ku*' or '*ni*' with *narimashita* (became), students were required to ask questions in pairs and were supposed to answer the question. The target student is student 4.

Transcription -4- Japanese lesson: student B

.....

9:18	S1: *Kurai heya deshita. Denki o tsukete Dounarimashita ka.*	It was a dark room. I put on the light. How was it changed?
9:27	S2: *Hai, akaruku ni narimashita.*	
9:28	T: *Hai, akaruku narimashita. Hai, Joe san wa?*	Yes, it became lighter. How about Joe?
9:42	S3: *Fransisco san wa, Rajio o kesuto, heya ni narimashita ka.*	When I turned off the radio, did it become a room? * (wrong expression)
9:48	S4: *Nn.....*[silence - 3.71'] (He puts his hand over his head and looks down and turns towards the teacher.)	
9:52	T : *Rajio o kesuto, dou narimashita ka.*	Turning off the radio, how did it change?
9:56	S1: *Dou narimashita ka?*	
9:59	S4: *Nn.....*[silence - 4.64'] *Urusai.* (Noisy). (He waves his hands around.)	
10:00	T : *Rajio ga tuiteiru to 'on' dato nan to iimasu ka.* Noisy *tte iuno wa nante iimasu ka.*	If the radio is on, what would you say? What is 'noisy' in Japanese?
10;03	S4: *Urusai.* *T: Sono hantai wa nandesu ka.*	What is the opposite meaning?
10:08	S4: *Urusakunari...*	..became noisy.
10:12	T : *Shizuka* (The teacher writes a word on the blackboard as a prompt.)	Quiet.
10:14	S4: *Shizukani narimashita.*	It became quiet.

10:15 T: *Soudesu ne.* Yes, it is.

.....

This student B's (student 4) use of silence was interpreted as follows;

	EI (N=22)	JI (n=19)
. He could not understand what is being asked and	45.5%	42.1%
. He was asking for the teacher's help.	22.7%	26.3%
. He didn't know the vocabulary to answer.	22.7%	15.8%
. He is not self conscious.	4.5%	0%
. Positive silence; trying to participate and thinking hard.	0%	10.5%
. He used his body language to hide his pressure and wants the teacher to prompt him.	4.5%	5.3%

Table 8.5 The interpretation of the use of silence by a learner of Japanese -B

As the table shows, student B's silence is interpreted as lack of understanding and lack of linguistic knowledge. There are two interesting points to look at. One is that 10.5% of JI interpreted the use of silence positively since his non-verbal behaviour shows his positive attitude. Also, a small number of informants regarded his gesture as a sign of pressure for not being quiet. His hand and head movements changed moment by moment. A JI interpreted this as fear for not being able to answer and this anxiety caused a lot of movement.

<u>The teacher's interpretation and the students' intention</u>
<u>The teacher's interpretation of the use of silence</u>

As a teacher, I interpreted those two students'silences as follows; with regards to student A, I interpreted his silence as his lack of understanding of the target structure (*naritakatta desu* - wanted to become). I also interpreted his silence as his attempt to understand and construct the appropriate expression. This is because he checked his understanding in English after his silence and he looked as though he was thinking. So I waited and I also felt that he was not 100% sure about the new structure's concept and its use. Therefore, I explained by contextualizing both

present and past tenses of the key sentences.

As for student B and for the first pause he made, I interpreted this as his difficulty in understanding what was being asked since the question asked by student A was grammatically incorrect. Then he looked at me and I asked the question in the correct form. However, after he understood the question, he seemed not to remember the word since he paused again. So I asked a question to elicit the word and he answered by changing the adverbial ending of the word but did not give a correct answer. With both students, I interpreted their use of silence as an indication of lack of understanding, or linguistic problems as most informants pointed out. This is largely because of the messages conveyed by their use of gestures such as posture, eye contact, and hand and head movement. They showed their willingness to participate.

<u>The students' intention</u>

Student A commented that he usually needed time to think before responding. And for this particular case, he commented that he did not understand the grammatically correct answer to the question, and waited for the teacher to explain more about the structure so that after the explanation, he understood the meaning and its use. Thus, the informants' interpretation matches his meaning of silence.

In the questionnaire, student B commented that he lacks confidence in speaking out, and said, 'I don't feel confident to speak; still afraid of making mistakes.' From his comment, he finds himself rather shy in interacting actively although he does not give that impression since he tends to answer immediately for most of the time. And at this particular moment, he commented that he did not understand the question because the form of the question was grammatically incorrect but understood after a prompt was given by a teacher. However, he could not remember the word

in order to answer the teacher.

Thus, from this analysis , one of the findings is that the use of silence by learners of Japanese was an indication of the lack of understanding and clear meaning from their non-verbal behaviour. In this way, the communication between the student and the teacher was successful since the students intention was clearly expressed and interpreted correctly . On the other hand, the use of silence by learners of English was problematic since the meaning of the silence itself was not clear enough to be interpreted correctly. In the next section, I shall discuss where this difference comes from.

8.5 Different aspects of language learning: Japanese versus Western contexts

Through the observation of language classes in both Western and Japanese contexts, several differences in relation to the use of silence were pointed out. I shall examine these differences more deeply from practical and educational perspectives. With regard to the practical aspect, an obvious difference was the number of students in a class (English class 16, Japanese class 8) and in the English class, students were all female and taught by a middle aged male teacher. On the other hand, the Japanese class was a mixed class in terms of gender and was taught by a young female teacher. Furthermore, the seating arrangement was also different.

As some informants pointed out, these practical differences might create divisions. For example, in the English class, this learning environment creates a sense of distance and coldness. On the other hand, the learning circumstance in the Japanese class creates a relatively relaxed atmosphere. Next, as far as the method used in the class is concerned, learners of Japanese in the Western context are familiar with the communicative method; learning by communicating maximally, emphasizing fluency rather than accuracy. On the other hand, learners of English

in a Japanese context were not trained to be communicators. Accuracy is required in expressing their ideas in both the spoken and written form in the Japanese context. Therefore, they expect to receive information rather than take part in the lesson. Furthermore, students communicative style in the Western and Japanese contexts differ distinctively. Most JI commented that learners of Japanese are not hesitant about speaking out and are not afraid of making mistakes and are not conscious of others' reactions since they react spontaneously. Basically, they try to utter something even if there is a mistake, as if they feel more inferior if they fail to utter any word as an answer. On the other hand, Japanese learners of English were hesitant and awkward about speaking out and preferred to place emphasis on listening to the teacher rather than challenging him or her by asking questions.

In addition, it is not clear whether they understood or not, if they were thinking or not, or if they just remained silent because they were unwilling to participate. They appeared to hide what was going on inside, and did not want to show that they did not understand by uttering a wrong word or a grammatically incorrect sentence. They seemed to show their psychological state by simply being silent. Also, once they were silent, they tended to wait for the teacher's action such as 1) waiting to be asked another question, 2) move to other students, 3) waiting for the teacher to read their mind. They seemed not to try to solve problems by themselves and waited passively. Therefore, it is not always totally clear to discern their problems. Here, it is important for us to bear in mind that non-speech may have one of at least two meanings as Kurzon (1998) mentions in the following:

> If it means the lack of communication, then it cannot imply silence in the sense in which I am analysing - as a communicative activity. Secondly, If non-speech means non-verbal communication, which includes kinesics and body language, proxemics, paralinguistic cues, as well as chronemics of which silence is usually considered a part, then such behaviour may also accompany speech. (Kurzon 1998: 11)

Referring to the second dimension of non-speech pointed out by Kurzon (1998), it surely applies to the use of paralanguage by student B learning Japanese. During the period of silence, his continuous hand and head movement gave an impression that he was trying to communicate willingly although verbal utterances did not follow this supposed intention. In this respect, his silence is compensated for paralinguistically. Therefore, his silence with non-verbal behaviour was interpreted as a positive sign of interaction. On the other hand, it can be said that Japanese students' use of silence caused by cultural reasons, such as not wanting to stick out in the class or not losing their face by making mistakes can be regarded as intentional silence when it is interpreted by a signified message in the form of a proposition of the type "I will not speak." "I should not speak," as Kurzon (1998) mentions.

8.6 Pressure to talk versus Pressure to be being silent

The final interesting finding is that there is a difference between being pressurised to talk and being pressurised to be silent. Japanese learners of English seemed to have lots of pressure to talk in public (in class) since they are very conscious of what others' think about their ideas. This culturally-oriented reason which originates from Confucianism prevents them from expressing their ideas. Moreover, the Japanese education system expects students to produce accurate information (LoCastro 1996) in their exams. Therefore, the desire for accuracy in class makes them need more time to think before responding.

Thus,this gives them pressure in trying to express themselves fully. On the other hand, it can be said that learners of Japanese feel uncomfortable with the existence of silence and feel more pressure. This makes them keep on talking to make the communication flow. For example, student B in the observed Japanese lesson used continuous gestures though he could not say enough words because of his lack of understanding. He himself finds that he is not confident

enough to speak out in class, though his gestures show his willingness to participate. It can be interpreted that he wanted to convey a sense of involvement by not being silent.

Another example is the continuous talk by the native American teacher in the English class. His teaching style was interpreted as being aggressive since he never made a pause during interaction with a student. This might also come from the pressure which he possibly feels in the classroom atmosphere. The final interesting example is an experience of a learner of Japanese in a class:

> A: This was a one to one session when I wanted to talk as much as possible.
> Q: You thought you have to talk?
> A: The teacher was, I think probably she found it irritating. I just felt so. She just a sort of...laughed about it and made a comment. I had been using a textbook which had a page or half a page with a dialogue at the beginning, telling a story of detective, mystery, suspense dialogue. It was set in a language school in Japan and there are sort of two students discussing the sudden mysterious disappearance of the third student in the language school foyer and there was a sort of nice backgound music. Then, I said, 'Why don't we get some nice background music in this language school?' you know, just in order to say something and she just thought that was quite strange.
> Q: Did you feel it from her facial expression or actually did she say to you?
> A: She actually said that. No, she didn't say 'Stop making a stupid comments, but she said, 'You always have to say something.'
> Q: So, when you speak in Japanese, do you talk less? Or Do you change your style?
> A: Probably. But, I still speak more than I should, more than expected.

Having looked at some examples from classroom observations, it can be said that the pressure to talk and the pressure to remain silent might differ in different cultural contexts. Although this can not be concretely generalized, the tendency indicates some reasons for communication breakdown among the participants from different cultural backgrounds.

8.7 Possible solution

Now I would like to explore what sort of strategies can actually help Japanese learners of English to express themselves more freely. During the interview with informants, there were common suggestions from both JI and EI, which might improve rather tense learning situations. They are: 1) to create a relaxed atmosphere, 2) to ask much easier questions to answer (to modify the questions), 3) to let them work in pairs before asking them to state their opinions individually. As for creating a relaxed atmosphere, an EI said that it would be better if the teacher sat on the desk and made some jokes. However, sitting on the desk is a very unusual behaviour in a teaching situation in Japan.

If students are not flexible enough to accept this, which they probably have never experienced before, it might cause problems. It would then be better for the teacher to wait until she or he can be sure that the students are ready to accept this culturally dispreferred and unexpected behaviour. On the other hand, most JI pointed out that it is important to create a sense of comfort and security.

This does not mean that students should be protected from any elements of teaching which would be different from their expectation. This is a matter of anxiety. As Tsui (1996) says, if students feel too anxious, they would not learn anything, so this kind of unnecessary anxiety should be lowered. However, as Nunan and Lamb (1996: 219) clarify, there are two types of anxiety, facilitating anxiety, which assists performance, and deliberating anxiety, which impedes it. What is important is to know where the anxiety possibly comes from. Nunan and Lamb (1996: 219) refer to a good example of this.

> It is not only fear of failure that can lead to anxiety. In many cultural contexts, it is considered unacceptable for talented learners to stand out from their peers. Such learners fear that they will be resented for breaking acceptable cultural norms by outperforming their peers.
> (Nunan and Lamb 1996: 219)

Furthermore, Malcom (1991) refers to the management of students' participation in language learning and claims that there are four 'rights' that can lead to loss of face. The rights are:

> . The right to contribute.
> . The right not to contribute.
> . The right to acceptance of the form of one's contribution
> . The right to acceptance of the content of one's contribution.
>
> (Malcolm 1991: 16)

As Malcolm comments, students rights to learn in their own individual way and socio-cultural norms need to be protected. The issue is the degree of negotiation between the teacher and students in order to create a good learning environment.

> It is also important that teachers learn that strategies which go against the legitimate right of the learner to maintain face are likely to be counter-productive. Classrooms should be places where the self-esteem of teachers and pupils alike is respected and fostered.
>
> (Malcolm 1991: 16)

As for the modification of the question, this technique is a common strategy in language teaching to facilitate active learning when students have difficulties in expressing their ideas. Nunan and Lamb (1996) refer to the teachers' anxiety caused by the existence of silence by students and states;

> One of the on-line decisions that teachers need to make is what to do when students fail to respond to questions. In both content, classrooms and language classroom, it has been found that teachers seem to become anxious if their questions are followed by silence.
>
> (Nunan and Lamb 1996: 84)

More specifically, Tsui (1996) refers to the existence of silence in the language classroom in a Hong Kong context and reports that there are teachers who try to fill the silence created by students by shortening the waiting time.This is because silence tends to break up the flow of the lesson. Furthermore, Nunan and Lamb (1996) add that if the flow of the lesson is stopped,

students' attention gets distracted and it is hard to pick up the pace again once it is lost.

In addition, as Tsui (1996) points out, Asian students find it difficult to answer open questions.

In addition, as the survey of this present study shows (see Chapter 7), expectation for better questioning is high and very specific as follows:

. Ask yes-no question first (1.4%)
. Ask understandable question (use simple words) (10.8%)
. Ask 'what do you think' type of question as it provides enough chance to practice.
. Further questioning (1.4%)

Questioning with simple words might help them to build up confidence by eliciting their ideas gradually in a rhythmic manner. On the other hand, there were also students who prefer to be asked open questions to improve their communicative skills in this study. Therefore, the fact that students tend to fail to answer open questions (Tsui 1996), does not necessarily mean that open-questions are not effective. Here, as Nunan and Lamb (1996: 84) emphasize, we do not mean to ascribe any moral superiority to open questions. The purpose of open and closed questions are clearly different. In relation to this, the issue of waiting time is important in language classrooms. The point given by Nunan and Lamb depicts the weakness of research on waiting time:

> The researchers and writers on wait time tend to present the issue in a rather simplistic manner, suggesting that less wait time is bad. Although we generally go along with the argument that learners should be given the mental space to process the question and respond, we also accept that there are certain high-structure situations in which pace and moment are at a premium, and in which prolonged wait time will be ultimately detrimental to the dynamics of the classroom interaction. (Nunan and Lamb 1996: 87)

Thus, the issue to be taken into account is not to put the priority in the use of open or closed question or shorter or longer wait time. The crucial issue is how to use different types of questions at the appropriate time, according to students' readiness, confidence and

willingness to do so in the specific socio-cultural context. Therefore, in particular, in the Japanese context, asking yes or no questions first functions as confidence building and as a bridge so as not to lose the rhythm of learning.

The suggestion of letting students do a task in pairs first was pointed out by an EI who has taught English to Japanese students. Since Japanese students tend to whisper or consult with others first before answering, it is very frustrating for the teacher. However, working with peers is as important as working with the teacher. Therefore, this can be an effective approach. On the other hand, as Hong Kong secondary school teachers point out (Tsui 1996), this approach can stop the flow of the conversation and they might just chat; reducing the possibilities of independent learning. This contradictive issue will be discussed more in the next chapter.

In addition to these three strategies, JI pointed out another eleven strategies which might help students to respond positively.

1. Present clear examples and practice it enough before asking them to give their opinions by themselves individually.
2. Do not focus on an individual for a long time, especially when the student is very shy as she or he might not want to be the focus of the class.
   It might also invite a counter effect. In that sense, be flexible with focusing on an individual according to their characteristics.
3. Do write the question on the board if they do not understand it orally. It might help them to understand since they are more confident with writing than speaking or listening.
4. Use choral repetition to make them feel secure and confident with the new structure, then move on to a more control-free task
5. Choral-pair-individual practice might help to build up their confidence.
6. Establish a good relationship with students both in and outside class
7. Be careful with selecting topics which ask students personal opinions
8. Check whether they understood or not.
9. Wait a bit longer for students' response than you do with Western students and bear in mind that students need time to construct the sentence properly, However, the time will be shortened as students become familiar with the method used by the teacher.
10. Teach them useful formulaic expressions to express their lack of understanding, uncertainness and to clarify the meaning of questions

11. Since students tend to be influenced by others' reaction, behaviour and classroom atmosphere, make the atmosphere relaxed so that all students can feel secure enough to challenge .

These suggestions pointed out by Japanese informants are not definite solutions since individual students have different learning styles, even though they are from the same cultural background. However, these suggestions are based on students and Japanese informants' voices and need to be taken into account. In summary, it can be said that Japanese students need a sort of clear guidance to step forward since their previous learning experience differs from the Western way of learning. They need to get gradual, clear guidance and also need to be provided with enough opportunities to experience new methods.

If well-organized steps are introduced in learning, and make sense to them, it would build their confidence. Particularly in the case of Japanese learners, as they are very conscious about others' reactions and so confidence building and creating a good atmosphere for learning is necessary. I regard this procedure as a necessary bridge for students. It seems a long process in eliciting before getting individual responses and making students independent learners. However, once they get confidence and know that there are different ways to learn a language and experience how to communicate, they would appreciate the richness of the difference between their own learning style and the Western one.

Of course, there would be learners who prefer to keep their Japanese style of learning. However, they all need to get opportunities to know and to experience how communication takes place in English, by trying a variety of different tasks and methods. The key factor is that those new approaches need to be introduced in culturally sensitive ways and with enough care. There needs to be negotiation between the teacher's approach and students readiness and reaction. This issue will be further discussed in the last chapter.

Chapter 9 Pedagogical Implications

9.0 Introduction

Having explored the use of silence by Japanese learners of English both theoretically and practically, it can be understood that the existence of silence in interaction has a variety of meanings and functions in different contexts. In this study, the analysis has focused upon the differences between the use of silence in Japanese and Western contexts in language learning. Not only do the length of silence and the frequency of the occurences differ, but there are occasions when their meanings are interpreted differently, and their functional difference is sometimes interpreted in a completely different way.

In this chapter, I would like to discuss what the use of silence by Japanese learners of English implies, and how it can be interpreted and treated in the EFL classroom. In so doing, I shall look at several important results of the data collected in this study in relation to the use of silence in language learning. One point to be borne in mind is that it is not my intention to over-generalize the result as absolute characteristics of Japanese learners of English. I simply intend to highlight the need to reduce cultural misunderstandings and create more successful cross-cultural communication. Here, specifically, the focus will be upon the use of silence in the EFL class.

9.1 Foreign Language Learning: Findings from the data analysis

9.1.1 Related Findings

Legutke and Thomas (1991) enumerate the elements present in any foreign language context, as follows:

> We refer here, to what the learners bring to the classroom, their prior knowledge in its broader sense, their experience of the world

> of the target language and its culture, their social, cultural and ethnic background and value systems; but also their preferences with regard to other people, to themes and ways of working; their knowledge of learning strategies and their expectations with regard to how learning should best be organized; their attitudes towards the subject of the school, to the teacher; their willingness to communicate, their readiness to take risks, their openness and ability to emphasize; and not least their inhibitions and idiosyncrasies which may derive from sources not involved with the learning process (feelings of alienation, anxiety and fear of rejection, feelings of distance) - all of which may oppose the unfolding of the learners' potential.
>
> (Legutke & Thomas 1991: 18)

This list reminds teachers not only of what is to be taken into account in any teaching situation, but also raises the important issue of where these elements come from, and how they should be inplemented in the EFL context. That is, it indicates that we should look at the origins of beliefs and attitudes which learners bring with them to the classroom. It is necessary for us to look at the interaction not only between the teacher and students, but also the relationship between the language learning context and the wider social context, and how they interact (Halliday 1994, Coleman 1996).

More specifically, Scollon and Scollon (1994) looked at Asian students, focusing on Hong Kong students' perceptions of teaching, which comes from the Confucianist tradition. They pointed out that the Western interpretation of Asian social relationships is seen through the filter of the Western camera (Scollon and Scollon 1994: 24). In the Japanese EFL context, the teaching method for effective learning from the Western point of view tends to be imported and regarded as the ideal model. This occurs without enough understanding of the Western sense of communicative language learning and also without enough readiness to accept alternative views in the Japanese context. Holliday (1994:9) also points out the mutual lack of knowledge of others in relation to social complexity.

> We do not know enough about how learning might be affected by the attitudes and expectations that people bring to the learning situation, which are influenced by social forces within both the insitution and the wider community outside the classroom, and which in turn influence the ways in which people deal with each other in the classroom. (Holliday 1994:9)

Thus, different interpretations or expectations of what is meant by belief, schemata and attitude can lead to differing perceptions of their mutual interaction. What is clear, however, is that attitude change does not operate in isolation (Morgan 1993: 72)

9.1.2 Questionnaires

In this section, I shall highlight several significant findings in the data obtained through the questionnaires. I shall also discuss how these findings can be utilised to facilitate successful classroom interaction in foreign language learning.

One main finding is that Japanese students' use of silence originated not only from linguistic problems, but also largely from psychological and cultural reasons. Furthermore, large numbers of students point out that the different turn-taking systems in English and Japanese interaction is one of their reasons for remaining silent. In general, their lack of confidence is the prominent phenomenon because of three main reasons; psychological fear, discoursal difference and cultural reasons. On the other hand, teachers' (both Japanese English teachers and Native English teachers) interpretation of silence by Japanese students differ slightly. Nearly 30% of JET and NET consider that students remain silent simply because they do not know the answer or do not understand. However, more NET point out the cultural reasons as an important aspect to understanding students' silence than JET do. One may suggest that NET's cultural awareness is higher than do JET's. I assume that this comes from NET's richer cross-cultural contact with

others. Nevertheless, students' psychological difficulties do not seem to be fully understood. Most teachers regard their silence as shyness or boredom because of the lack of spontaneous reaction. It is, however, a natural reaction if students' cultural background is not known.

Japanese students' reluctance to state their opinions freely may relate to one of the cultural norms, *Wa* and consensus-decision making. In order to keep social harmony, there are students who think that they should provide answers which match other's ideas. Judging from the responses obtained from learners, they seem to have difficulties in expressing themselves for cultural rather than linguistic reasons.

Even though students may have their own ideas, something reflected upon in their mind or something whispered in a small voice is not actually heard, and therefore, not conveyed properly to other participants. Students' lack of confidence can also be understood through their responses about the question 'If you have something to say in class but lack confidence, what would you do?'. Compared to Western students of Japanese, there are many Japanese learners of English who would say, 'I do not know,' rather than challenging or volunteering by giving their idea. Also, there are students who would wait for teachers' support. Thus, from the results of the questionnaire, it can be understood that the reasons for remaining silent are deeply related to Japanese cultural values, which put more value on social harmony than individual responsibility.

9.1.3 Video-recorded data

Regarding the use of silence in the actual class, two scenes from the EFL class and another two scenes from a Japanese class were recorded for the analysis in this study. The most distinctive feature of the use of silence by Japanese students in the EFL class was that Japanese informants interpreted its meaning positively from a Japanese cultural perspective,

such as the importance of keeping harmony, consensus-decision making and the shame of making mistakes. They also commented that the use of silence itself conveyed indirect, ambiguous messages. On the other hand, English informants interpreted the use of silence negatively, as indicating disinterest, laziness, boredom and rudeness. This particularly different interpretation exists because of cultural, pragmatic and pedagogical differences between the Western and the Japanese contexts.

In any learning context, there are of course students who are not confident enough to express themselves freely and prefer to learn by listening. However, the degree to which students remain silent in the Japanese context and in the Western context differ. In the case of the Japanese context, the reasons for being silent are deeply related to cultural reasons. In addition, different turn-taking systems also affect students' verbal responses. Both students and teachers need opportunities to understand why communication breakdowns occur. In order to create a more comfortable learning environment, it is necessary to bridge the psychological distance created by different cultural norms in the West and the Orient. One of the important steps is to create a relaxed atmosphere which eliminates unnecessary tension but produces reliance between teachers and learners.

9.2 Teacher-student relationships

Based on the findings of the data analysis, I shall discuss expected teacher-student relationships in the Japanese context in relation to Japanese cultural norms. With regards to the expected teacher-student relationship, each culture has a sort of expected relationship between the teacher and students.

As for the Japanese EFL context, I shall discuss three possible culturally oriented elements

which influence Japanese learning style. Firstly, as LoCastro(1996) points out, there is a possibility that ideas about 'communication' itself may be different across cultures. For example, in the Japanese context, silent communication is valued (Ishii 1984, Loveday 1982).

> Japanese Buddhism, especially *Zen* reinforced the notion
> that oral expression was superficial if not superfluous:
> *satori* or enlightenment cannot be obtained by talking about it.
> For the Japanese, the world is not verbalizable nor is it
> aesthetically pleasing to try. (Loveday 1982: 3)

Ishii also refers to this aspect; the relationship between communication in Japan and Buddhism and says;

> Unquestionably, the value of Zen silence represented
> by *Ishin-denshin* (mind to-mind intuitive communication)
> has long influenced Japanese communication behaviours,
> as is evidenced by traditional aesthetic and martial arts today.
> (Ishii 1984: 54)

The second culturally oriented reason is influenced by Shintoism which puts emphasis on perfectionism.

> A tendency towards perfectionism can be said to be a
> characteristic of Japanese culture in general; this is
> believed to stem from early shinto influences which include
> a belief in the perfectibility of human beings.
> (Ishii 1984: 54)

Some elements in the EFL context in Japan reflect this perfectionism (LoCastro 1996: 50). For example, perfect grammatical accuracy is the objective, and consequently, learners avoid participating in class so as to avoid the danger of making a mistake. This perfectionism is reflected in the aim of learning English proposed by the Japanese Ministry of Education (1990); one of the aims of the 'language activities' is 'to speak without missing important things, by arranging what one intends to say'. This implies that successful communication depends on how perfectly you can organize elements of sentences in 'correct' order.

Another interesting example is the perfectionism created by Japanese teachers of English. An example from my own experience was when I attended a regional conference for English teachers working at Japanese secondary schools. As well as workshops and talks, some teachers participated in demonstration lessons in order to enable us to discuss some issues in relation to English language teaching. The pressure which both the teacher and the students experience can easily be imagined under such an unusual learning or teaching situation. During the post-class discussion, an American English teacher asked the following question of the teacher who demonstrated the lesson; 'Have you had a rehearsal?' This implies a perfectionism in the teaching procedure, one without major disruption in terms of the smoothness of classroom interaction. That is, a successful lesson in this situation was judged as being related to how successfully the teacher managed to teach smoothly. In this sense, the success of teaching was supposed to be evaluated in terms of how seldom students made mistakes in the lesson. Therefore, it led the teacher to address brighter students more in order to save face. In that sense, the class was created to save the face of the teacher and students in public. It was as if the perfect learning performance had been achieved on the stage.

The final possible culturally oriented source for the use of silence which affects teacher-student relationship is related to Confucianism which puts emphasis on co-operation and collectivism. This aspect creates a sense of ambiguity in order to keep harmony in the society. In the following, there is a comment from a learner of Japanese.

> When I read Japanese articles, sometimes I wonder why Japanese structure is so ambiguous that you cannot understand what it wants to say. It is obvious in one sentence... The content of the article wasn't that difficult - but I nonetheless had trouble distinguishing what the most important points were...
>
> (Cited from Shaw 1996: 330)

Also, the same student gave another comment on his speaking style in Japanese.

> Most times, I try to be clear and grammatically correct (a challenge in itself), although I do notice that I tend, when speaking Japanese to use more qualifiers or statements which 'discount' my main point, such as '*hakkiri wakaranai keredo'* (I'm not sure but...) or statements to elicit support, *'ja nai desu ka / to omoimasen ka'* (isn't it the true / don't you think that)? (Cited from Shaw 1996: 31)

Having looked at the relationship between some cultural values and EFL teaching or learning, it may be understood that the teacher-learner relationship is deeply related to cultural values (including religious, political values). It is also true that different perceptions of learning can possibly invite negative evaluation. As several examples show, Japanese learning style puts more emphasis on accuracy or perfectionism than does the Western learning style. This may lead some conflict between a teacher-students in the EFL context. In extreme cases, as Scollon and Scollon (1994) point out, teaching methodologies that rely heavily on individual autonomy will not work as well as those which rely on these traditional relationships (Scollon and Scollon 1994: 19).

9.3 Should non-verbal behaviour be taught?

The data collected in this study suggest that the English and Japanese informants interpret the use of silence by Japanese learners of English differently. For this reason, misunderstandings leading to communication breakdown are likely to take place in the EFL class when Japanese students are silent. The reasons for remaining silent, however, come mainly from cultural reasons. Most students are unconsciously accustomed to remaining silent, especially in a public context. In this sense, their use of silence is the expression of their Japanese identity. This raises the issue of whether it is desirable for them to change their behaviour into the Western

way or not. However, if the negotiation and mutual understanding between interactants from different cultural backgrounds are lost, it is difficult for the interactants to communicate successfully. With respect for each interactant's identity, what can we do as teachers in the foreign language classroom?

Recently many scholars have suggested that it is necessary for learners to be taught non-verbal aspects of communication (Goldman 1988, Jungheim1994, Byram 1997).

Jungheim (1994) defines 'non-verbal ability' as knowing how to use and interpret a variety of non-verbal behaviours or cues appropriate for the target language and culture. Kane (1990) also claims that students should be in a position to recognise differences and similarities between their own and the target society. However, there are several problematic issues arising from teaching non-verbal communication: i) If the teacher teaches this aspect, what are the objectives? ii) Is it desirable for learners to acquire non-verbal aspects of communication like a native speaker?

As far as the first point is concerned, Byram (1997) raises two important issues: the issue of consciousness and the issue of identity as follows:

> Yet precisely because many aspects of non-verbal communication, are unconscious, the language learner may not be able to control them, or wish to give up what feels like a part of their personality, to acquire the non-verbal communication of others.
>
> (Byram 1997: 14)

As he points out, when we communicate with others, we generally use non-verbal expressions unconsciously, even if there are also times when we use them intentionally. In addition, knowing and understanding the differences in the use of non-verbal communication cannot guarantee that learners can control themselves consciously, even when they wish to do so.

Furthermore, there is the more complicated issue of identity also pointed out by Byram (1997).

There are occasions when learners feel that it is difficult and uncomfortable to behave like native speakers of the target language, even if they understand the specific cultural meaning or functions of the particular non-verbal expression. However, what needs to be considered is the purpose or learning non-verbal behaviour in language learning. It is obviously not aimed at making them behave like native speakers of the target language in all aspects of communication, unless they have a specific aim to pursue, such as being required to perform a specific role as an actor on the stage.

However, the fundamental aim of learning a foreign language is to establish a relationship between the students and other systems for communicative purposes (Byram 1997: 14). That is, it is suggested that learners ought to be trained not to be like a native speaker but to be a successful communicator who can establish a good relationship with others according to their needs. Then, what is to be taught to learners in terms of the use of non-verbal expressions in cross-cultural communication?

9.4 What is to be taught?

> It goes without saying that language learners need non-verbal sociolinguistic ability not only to improve communication but also to avoid what could be agonizing non-verbal misunderstandings. (Jungheim 1994: 150)

Jungheim also refers to more specific strategies which learners would need to develop;

1) Sociolinguistic ability..... It includes the ability to recognize the appropriate use of non-verbal behaviours such as the less frequent use of head nodding by native speakers of English as well as the ability to use and interpret gestures that vary from culture to culture.

2) Strategic ability..... This ability includes the learner's use of non-verbal behaviours such as gestures or mime to compensate

> for insufficient linguistic knowledge, when necessary, as well as the appropriateness of the learner's use of gestures. (Jungheim 1994: 151)

As Jungheim (1997) points out, there are two different elements in learning non-verbal behaviour in the target language. One is the recognition of the appropriate use of non-verbal behaviour in each cultural context. Another is to have the ability to use non-verbal behaviour appropriately.

As far as the first point is concerned, this aspect needs to be taught in order to eliminate unnecessary communication breakdowns and to provide learners opportunities for understanding. The second point is also important as a means of compensating for insufficient linguistic knowledge as Jungheim (1994) points out. However, the decision for the use of appropriate non-verbal behaviour in the target language should be made by learners since this issue deeply relates to their cultural identities. Nevertheless, I emphasize that learners need to be given the opportunity to learn the use of non-verbal behaviour in these two different levels for successful communication.

9.5 How non-verbal behaviour can be taught

Having discussed the importance of non-verbal behaviour as an element of foreign language teaching, the focus will be shifted to the possible ways of teaching this aspect. Here, I would like to draw attention to four significant points in teaching. They are:

i) The danger of being essentialist
ii) The development of mutual inter-cultural communication
iii) The significance of a step by step, culturally sensitive approach, and meaningful experience by learners
iv) The issue of individual responsibility

As far as the first point is concerned, Barro, Jordan and Roberts (1998) have suggested that there are occasions when cultural references take the form of essentialist statements with little sense

of individual agency (1998: 77). This point is also supported by Kramsch (1998). She warns that encouraging students and teachers to be aware of their own and other's national identities and asking them to speak openly in class about their own ethnic, gender-related, race-related, or class-related particularities can easily fall prey to reductionism, essentialism and stereotyping (Kramsch 1998: 31). As Kramsch points out, merely listing up differences or similarities between two different cultures would provide learners with a shallow understanding of themselves and others' cultures. The important issue is to what extent can learners or teachers communicate successfully with mutual satisfaction while taking into account these cultural differences and how they accomplish this successfully?

Referring to the second point, Jin & Cortazzi (1998) place emphasis on the importance of building a bridge of mutual inter-cultural learning. Although their study is of Chinese learners, their conclusions are also relevant to the EFL context in Japan. As an important example of this, they refer to a 'culture of learning', which includes culturally based ideas about teaching and learning, about appropriate ways of participating in class and about how and whether or not to ask questions.

> The Western teachers expected Chinese students to request clarification if they did not understand or to express any anxiety or doubt if they need any help....They [Chinese students] expect the teacher and other students, to be sensitive to any need for help and to offer it (unasked) when it was needed.
>
> (Jin & Cortazzi 1998: 105)

This is an example of communication breakdown caused by the different cultures of learning. In order to create a better learning environment, Jin and Cortazzi claim that the emphasis needs to be on a 'two-way acculturation, instead of a one-way version.' They explain that this could mean that participants develop a mutual awareness and understanding of each others' culture.

Mutual understanding and adaption by choice, rather than

> assimilation, is stressed, for the latter may cause a psychological barrier and a fear of the loss of L1 identity.
> (Jin & Cortazzi 1998: 112)

With regard to the third point, from the results of the questionnaire used in this study, the importance of a culturally sensitive, step by step approach was suggested for Japanese learners of English. The following points proposed by Byram as the attitudinal objectives for learning are significant.

> 1) Willingness to seek out or take up opportunities to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality.
> 2) Interest in discovering other perspectives on interpretation of familiar or unfamiliar phenomena both in one's own and in other cultures and cultural practices.
> 3) Willingness to question the values and presuppositions in cultural practices and products in one's own environment.
> 4) Readiness to experience the different stages of adaptation to and interaction with, another culture.
> 5) Readiness to engage with the conventions and rites of verbal and non-verbal communication and interaction.
> (Byram 1998: 79)

These points suggested by Byram (1998) are significant since they take the psychological state of learners in language learning into account. When using Japanese learners of English as an example, it is true that large numbers of students are interested in learning English though the degree of enthusiasm might differ. Their willingness might also be shown in their serious attitudes to learning in their own way. However, since their willingness tends not to be shown by active verbal participation in learning, it is hard for Western teachers to see whether they are willingly participating or not. In this respect, opportunities for learners to show their willingness can be provided by teachers. With regard to Byram's fourth and the fifth points, these are the aspects which Japanese learners need to be confident enough with in learning. If learners lack these two aspects, it is obvious that they cannot communicate with confidence cross-culturally even if they are really motivated and interested in learning. Therefore, as Byram (1998) states,

the classroom can be the location for reflection on skill and knowledge acquisition beyond the classroom walls, and therefore for the acquisition of attitudes towards experienced. That is, the classroom has a valuable role in facilitating learners' successful cross-cultural communication. This also means that learners need to engage in actual communication with an open and challenging mind.

Finally, individual responsibility and choice should be respected in student communication. There will be learners who wish to follow their own cultural way of communication or follow the target cultures. However, individuals will always vary in the degree of adjusting to another culture or choosing to remain with their own culture. Kramsch (1998: 76) states that ' the privilege of the inter-cultural speaker must be accompanied by an increased sense of personal and individual responsibility in the use of words and in the ownership of their meaning.' In this respect, Wright's (1995) own learning experience of Art referring to the relationship between himself and the teacher provides significant insights for learning languages:

> My art teacher's values in life included the idea that the world is full of triviality and that we humans must strive to discover grander meanings in it or through it or behind it, not just that we should get the grander meanings given to us but that we take on the responsibility for searching for them. (Wright 1995:3)

9.6 The treatment of the use of silence in class

Both the theoretical discussion and the data analysis suggest that there are misinterpretations between the Western teacher and Japanese learners of English because of a lack of understanding of the others' culture, beliefs and values behind actual foreign language learning. Regarding the use of silence by Japanese learners of English, I suggest that there are three significant

pedagogical points;

1) The need to provide opportunities for understanding the value of silence in communication in both Western and Japanese contexts, and how the use of silence could be differently interpreted
2) The need to provide opportunities for experiencing cross-cultural communication
3) The need to foster flexible attitudes and strategies to solve problems in communication.

The following is the conversation between an English informant and a Japanese informant and the researcher in a video viewing session.

R: If you are a teacher, what would you do if the student keeps silent?
EI: I don't know. I would...perhaps move on to another student.
JI: Me, too. And I will come back to her.
EI: I would make a joke, make her feel more relaxed. If she still remains silent, I interpret it as her personality.
JI: I move to another student, not keep on asking questions because she will be more nervous.
R: Do you think it (her reaction) is very Japanese?
JI: Yes, it is. When I do not understand, I rely on physical behaviour. If I want to understand, I will concentrate on listening.
R: Do you think it is also difficult to express yourself in that situation?
JI: It depends on the atmosphere, actually, this class is quiet.
EI: She is very cold.
JI: Even I want to say something, I can not say anything straight away. Probably I would answer with a monosyllabic words quietly. If the class is more lively, noisy, it is easier to answer.
R: Is it much easier if the teacher allows you to discuss with your friend to answer or in a group?
JI: To share? Yeah.
EI: During the lesson?
JI: Yeah.
EI: After the lesson?
JI: One to one is more pressure.
EI: Of course. On the other hand, if you don't answer, people interpret you can't think by yourself. So, what do you do?

From this discussion, it can be understood that there is a conflict in English language learning between being protective and allowing learners to be independent. In section 9.1, we saw that there are culturally specific approaches and methods which are familiar to students in local

contexts. It was noted that a dilemma as to what sort of approach is effective in teaching English to students who were trained in non-Western ways of learning (mainly grammar-translation methods) exists. Yet, should students change their learning style to the Western way or should the teacher change his or her style into the one which matches the local expectation? Tsui (1996:145) refers to this fact and comments;

> Although one should avoid making the sweeping generalization that talking equals learning, and forcing students to participate when they are not ready, one cannot deny that participation is very important in language learning. (Tsui 1996: 145)

Taking her point, and the comments made by students in the questionnaire in this present study into account, there are Japanese learners of English who want the teacher to adjust their teaching style somehow: for example, by addressing them individually so that they don't have to compete to take turns. On the other hand, there are students who wish to learn a Western English communicative style. For these reasons, enough chances to know and experience both the Japanese and the Western way of learning should be provided in an appropriate culturally-sensitive way.

Ogasawara (1995: 109) refers to a Japanese characteristic in expressing opinions.

> Although a Japanese speaker may have a different opinion, he or she will usually hesitate to bring it up out of fear that such frank behaviour could hurt the other person's feelings or make that person lose face, especially in the presence of others. They just do not want to stand out in the audience. They would rather remain silent. (Ogasawara 1995: 109)

In order to fill the gap between learners' previous learning experience and the challenge to experience the new method, students need to learn how to negotiate meaning and how to repair a conversation when it breaks down (Korst 1997). However, this raises the issue of knowing whether or not the difference can lead to a better understanding or not. Teachers' explanation

could be an introductory step towards awareness of cultural differences.

Yet, simply knowing the differences does not in itself create opportunities to be fully aware of them. This postulate directly relates to the example of the Western teacher in the video recorded data. In spite of his deep understanding of Japanese culture and Japanese language proficiency and long teaching experience, a bridge was needed both for students and the teacher to interact more successfully. For this, I assume that there are five important aspects which need to be borne in mind. The Western teacher of Japanese students should

1) provide a clear aim for each task and item
2) give clear examples of how to do each task
3) allow a learner responses time after asking a question
4) take step by step approach and make sure that students' readiness and confidence are being built for learning.
5) provide enough opportunities to practice, to use and to experience different types of communication by themselves

With regards to 1) and 2) , Legutke and Thomas (1991) comment as follows;

> They (young learners) need to be shown how to do it and encouraged to believe that believing in themselves and their input into a language-learning lesson contributes positively to how and what they learn. Opening up this opportunity for learners is the responsibility of the teacher in her role as a facilitator. (Legutke & Thomas 1991: 288)

Moreover, as Craig (1995) comments, once the students had been presented with examples, they were less resistant to experiencing new methods since it made them ready to try.

As for waiting time, there is a controversy as to whether longer waiting-times are needed or not. For example, Korst (1997) believes that the waiting-time for Japanese students is not so effective.

> The teacher should allow a longer waiting-time. However, while this approach may be beneficial with some students, allowing a longer waiting-time with Japanese students may

> only compound the problem since an answer may not be forthcoming regardless of the interval. (Korst 1997: 279)

Although there are individual differences in the use of pauses before responding, a little longer waiting time for eliciting answers from Japanese students might work effectively since Japanese cultural values emphasize accurately expressed thoughtful comments, and encourages accurate expressions. That is, although the waiting-time for students' responses can vary according to the situation, the cultural preference for the use of longer pauses before responding should be taken into account. Therefore, it cannot simply be said that longer-waiting times cannot be effective. As far as the fifth point is concerned, it is important that students learn cultural differences and how to communicate with others from different socio-cultural backgrounds by actually experiencing various communicative events. Byram points this out as follows:

> In an educational framework which aims to develop critical cultural awareness, relativisation of one's own and valuing of others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours does not happen without a reflective and analytical challenge to the ways in which they have been formed and the complex of social forces within which they are experienced. (Byram 1997: 35)

The final important point to be mentioned is that of confidence-building. As Legutke and Thomas (1991) point out, the self-confidence of the individual learner, and trust both in other learners and the teacher are essential. Classroom procedures demand from the learner flexibility, co-operation, a willingness to learn in different group formations and the ability to accept increasing responsibility for his or her own learning (Legutke and Thomas 1991:83)

I have suggested a number of practical ways of creating a better atmosphere for Japanese learners of English. Each point might contribute to the elimination of unnecessary misunderstandings or

communication breakdowns, however, these are not of course, definite solutions. I rather consider these points as fostering a flexible and sensitive attitude in teachers and learners in cross-cultural communication, and creating a positive atmosphere so that language learners need not be conscious of others' reactions or afraid of making mistakes.

9.7 Culturally sensitive approaches and the negotiation between the teacher and learners

> Every teaching situation involves interaction between a given teaching method, the students and the wider socio-cultural context of learning. If this interaction is not a happy one, learning is unlikely to be effective, no matter how good the credentials of the teaching method may be in theoretical terms.
> (Tudor 1996: 276)

As Tudor points out, good learning cannot take place without acknowledging values, problems or strategies in different social contexts. Craig (1995) comments more specifically;

> When teaching in a native cultural environment where individualistic and competitive behaviours are more highly valued (such as in a class of North American students learning a foreign language, e.g. French or Japanese), it may be necessary to place greater emphasis on individual scores or contributions when designing the evaluation component of the program. (Craig 1995: 50)

Thus, the fact that the Japanese use intuitive communication (*ishin-denshin*) to convey important messages, and the Japanese tend to be indirect to save their face and the use of *enryo-sasshi* (comformity-mind reading) needs to be understood. This does not mean that it is necessary that the Japanese communicative style be adopted by Westerners. I assume that it is valuable to be flexible and open to appreciate good aspects of our own and others. This is not a matter of winning or losing a better position. Both learners' and the target cultures' identity and the way in which people express themselves should be respected.

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> The task of the language teacher is a difficult one: to facilitate a degree of socialization which will enable learners to send and receive text as discourse, while also guarding their right to be different and to enrich others through that difference, bringing to the language they are learning the wealth of their own individuality and culture. (Cook 1989: 125)

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Appendix: 1-A-1

A questionnaire on teaching English to Japanese students

Part I: Background Information

1. Sex: Male / Female 2. Age ( ) 3. Nationality ( )
4. First Language ( ) 5. Second Language ( )
6. Teaching Experience (Overall) ( )
7. Teaching Experience to Japanese students: a) the length: ( )
   b) in Japan / Outside Japan
   c) Monolingual class / Multilingual class
8. Types of institution you are currently working for: ( )
9. Average number of students in a class ( )
10. Please explain your educational background briefly and the medium of instruction.
    ( )
11. Your experience of staying aborad (any country except your own / native country):
    Please specify 1) the length of stay, 2) the place, 3) the reason for the stay.
    ( )

* If you are non-native speaker of Japanese, please answer the following questions.
  a) Do you speak Japanese? Which level? ( )
  b) If you are learning Japanese, what is the most challenging thing for you in learning and communicating with the Japanese?
  ( )
  c) Average time you spend communicating with Japanese people each week..

  In Japanese: ( )
  In English: ( )

Part II: English language teaching to Japanese students

1. Which aspects do you enjoy most in teaching English to Japanese students?

2. What types of activities do your students enjoy ?

3. What was your first impression in teaching English to Japanese students?

4. What is the most challenging thing for you in teaching English to Japanese students?

5. Do you feel that Japanese students are rather shy or quiet?

6. Do you feel uncomfortable if your Japanese students do not answer your questions immediately?

7. If your students keep silent, how do you interpret their use and meaning of silence ? And What do you do?

8. When you teach English to Japanese students, do you take extra care to take cultural differences into account?

9. If a friend was planning to teach English to Japanese students and asks you what the key points in teaching English to Japanese students are, which key points do you tell him or her?

Part III: <u>Questions on the cultural differences in communication</u>

1. When you communicate with people, which points do you care about in conversation? Please provide 3 points for each situation.

In Japanese:	In English:
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)

2. During a conversation in your native language, do you nod frequently? How do you interpret the role and use of nodding? (= When do you nod?)

( )

3. Even if you have something to say, do you miss the chance to talk during the conversation?

In Japanese: always / frequently / sometime / seldom / not at all

In English: always / frequently / sometime /seldom / not at all

4. Do you feel uncomfortable if there is a period of silence during the conversation? If so, specify the situation. And is there any occasion you appreciate the existence of silence? (eg. With somebody I am not very intimate with...)

In your naitve language:

5. When do you keep silent in conversation?

In Japanese:

In English:

6. When is it polite and impolite to be silent in conversation?

In Japanese:

a) Polite:

b) Impolite:

In English:

a) Polite:

b) Impolite:

7. If your friend asks you the important points of living in Japan, what would you tell him or her? Provide 3 points.

-
-
-

Appendix 1-A-2

A questionnaire on teaching Japanese to non-Japanese students (English-speaking)

Part I: Background Information

1. Sex: Male / Female 2. Age ( ) 3. Nationality ( )
4. First Language ( ) 5. Second Language ( )
6. Teaching Experience of teaching Japanese: a) the length ( )
b) in Japan / outside Japan ( )
7. Types of institution you are currently working for: ( )
8. Average number of studnets in a class ( )
9. Please explain your educational background briefly.
( )
10. Your experience of staying abroad (any contry except your own / native country)
Please specify 1) the length of stay, 2) the place, 3) the reason for the stay.
( )

Part II: Japanese language teaching

1. Which aspects do you enjoy most in teaching Japanese to Non-Japanese students?

2. What types of activities do your students enjoy?

3. What was your first impression in teaching Japanese to N.J. students?

4. What is the most challenging thing for you in teaching Japanese ?

5. Do you feel that N.J. students are rather shy or quiet?

6. Do you feel uncomfortable if your students do not answer your questions immediately?

7. If your students keep silent, how do you intyerpret their use and meaning of silence? And what do you do?

8. When you teach Japanese to N.J. students, do you take extra care to take cultural differences into account?

9. If a firend was planning to teach Japance to N.J. students and asks you what the key points In teaching Japanese are, which key points do you tell him or her?

Part III: <u>Questions on the cultural differences in communication</u>

1. When you communicate with people, which points do you care about in conversation? Please provide 3 points for each situation.

In Japanse:	In English:
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)

2. During a conversation in your native language, do you nod frequently? How do you interpret the role and use of nodding? (= When do you nod?)

3. Even if you have something to say, do you miss the chance to talk during the conversation?

In Japanese:	Always /	Frequently /	Sometimes /	Seldom /	Not at all
In English:	Always /	Frequently /	Sometimes /	Seldom /	Not at all

4. Do you feel uncomfortable if there is a period of silence during the conversation? If so, specify the situation. And is there any occasion you appreciate the existence of silence? (eg. With somebody I am not very initmate with.....)

In Japanese:

In English:

5. When do you keep silent in conversation?

In Japanese:

In English:

6: When is it polite and impolite to be silent in conversation?

In Japanese:	In English:
a) Polite:	a) Polite:
b) Impolite:	b) Impolite:

7. If your friend asks you the important points of living in Japan, what would you tell him or her ? Provide 3 points.

1)
2)
3)

Appendix: 1-B (English)

A questionnaire on learning English

Part I: Background Information

1. Nationality ( ) 2. Age ( ) 3. Sex: Male / Female

4. First Language ( ) 5. Second Language ( )

6. Occupation: a) Student (Place of study:)
b) Worker (Job title:)
c) Others ( )

7. How long have you studied English? And Where? ( )

8. Have you ever studied English overseas? Yes / No
* If 'Yes', Where? ( ) and How long? ( )

9. Have you ever studied any subjects in English? If so, which subjects? Where did you learn and
how long? ( )

10. How many hours do you spend communication with others in English per week?
( )

11. How many hours do you spend watching TV, films, video or listening music in English per week?
( )

12. What do you think your level of English is?

Reading: Beginner / Pre-Intermediate / Upper-Intermediate / Advanced
Writing: Beginner / Pre-Intermediate / Upper-Intermediate / Advanced
Speaking: Beginner / Pre-Intermediate / Upper-Intermediate / Advanced
Listening: Beginner / Pre-Intermediate / Upper-Intermediate / Advanced

Part II: Questions on learning English.

1. What are the difficulties when you communicate with your teacher and with your classmates in English during the lesson?
( )

2. During a English lesson, do you feel that you want more time to think before responding to teachers or your class mates?

a) always / sometime / seldom / not at all

b) Why do you feel so?
1) I need enough time to translate my idea into English.
2) The speed or tempo in speaking in English is much faster than the speed or tempo in speaking in my native language.
3) I need enough time to sum up my idea.
4) Others

3. Are there times when you can think of something to say but you don't raise your hand or say anything?

a) always / sometime / seldom / not at all

b) What are the reasons for remining silent?

4. If you don't understand your teacher's question or how to do the activity given, what would you do? (Make a tick which is appropriate)

A) Behaviour
a) I look directly at my teacher ( )
b) I look away. (look down / look up = don't use eye contact) ( )
c) I hang my head down. ( )
d) Others (Please specify) ( )

B) Response
a) I ask my teacher to repeat the question again or explain more. ( )
b) I consult with my classmates. ( )
c) I keep silent. ( )
d) Others ( )

5. If you need more time to think before responding , what do you do?

A) Behaviour
a) I look directly at my teacher ( )
b) I look away. (look down / look up = dont't use eye contact) ( )
c) I hang my head down. ( )
d) Others (Please specify) ( )

B) Response
a) I tell my teacher that I still need time to think ( )
b) I don't say anything. (= I keep silent.) ( )
c) Others ( )

6. You think you know the answer to say but don't have enough confidence to tell it in front of the class, what do you do?

A) Behaviour
a) I look directly at my teacher ( )
b) I look away. (look down / look up = don't use eye contact) ( )
c) I hang my head down. ( )
d) Others (Please specify) ( )

B) Response
a) I say 'I don't know.' ( )
b) I don't say anything. ( )
c) I wait for the time when my teacher tell me or ask me something more. ( )
d) I wait for the time when my teacher ask the question to others. ( )
e) I don't have this problem. ( )
f) Others (Please specify) ( )

7. When you have difficulties expressing yourself in spoken English, what do you expect your teacher to do for you?

8. What would you like teachers to understand about your culture or your culture's way of communicating?

Part III: Questions on the cultural differences in communication

1. When you communicate with people, which points do you care about in conversation? Please provide 3 points for each situation.

In your own language:
1)
2)
3)

In English:
1)
2)
3)

2. During the conversation in your native language, do you nod frequently? How do you interpret the role and use of nodding? (= When do you nod?)

3. When do you keep silent in conversation?

In your native language:

In English:

4. When is it polite and impolite to be silent in conversation?

In your native language:
a) Polite:

b) Impolite:

In English:
a) Polite:

b) Impolite:

5. Do you feel uncomfortable if there is a period of silence during the conversation. If so, specify the situation? And is there any occasion you appreciate the existence of silence? (eg. With somebody you are not very intimate with...)

In you native language:

a) I feel uncomfortable when...

b)I appreciate the existence of silence when..

In English:

a) I feel uncomfortable when...

b) I appreciate the existence of silence when..

Appendix: 1-B-2 (Japanese Version)

英語学習　及び　異文化理解に関するアンケート

A）英語の学習歴に関して、答えて下さい

1　年令（　　）2　性別・男・女　3　母国語（　　）

4　職業　a）学生　（学校名　　学年　　）

b）社会人（職種　　）

c）その他（　　）

5　今までに、どこで、どれ位の期間、英語を学びましたか

（　　）

6）　海外で英語を学んだことが、ありますか。　　はい　・　いいえ

＊「はい」と、答えた人は、どこで、どの位の期間、勉強しましたか。

（　　）

7　今までに、英語以外の授業を英語を使って勉強したことが、ありますか

勉強したことがある人は、何を、どこで、どの位の期間、勉強したか

答えて下さい。

（　　）

8　一週間のうちに何時間位、英語を使って、人と接する時間が、ありますか。

（英語の授業を含む）

（　　）

9）　一週間のうちに何時間位、ラジオやテレビ、ビデオ、CD、映画などを

通して、英語に接する時間が、ありますか

（　　）

10　あなたの英語のレベルは、どれくらいだと思いますか

読むこと：　初級　・　中級下　・　中級上　・　上級

書くこと：　初級　・　中級下　・　中級上　・　上級

話すこと：　初級　・　中級下　・　中級上　・　上級

聞くこと：　初級　・　中級下　・　中級上　・　上級

B）英語の学習に関して

1　英語の授業中に、先生やクラスメートと、英語でコミュニケーションをとる時に、難しいと感じることは、何ですか。

（　　）

2　英語の授業中、先生の質問に答えたり、クラスメートとコミュニケーションをとる時、話す前に、もう少し考える時間があればと、思ったことがありますか

a）よく思う　・　時々そう思う　・たまにそう思う　・　全く思わない

b）理由は何ですか。

1）日本語で考えたことを、英語に訳す時間が、欲しいから。

2）英語で話す時は、日本語で話す時よりも、会話のやりとりのテンポが

3　あなたは、会話の途中で、どんな時に、沈黙すると思いますか。

日本語で話す時　　英語で話す時

4　会話の途中で、沈黙することが大切だと思うのは、どんな時ですか。
また、逆に、失礼にあたると思うのは、どんな時ですか・

日本語
ａ）大切だと思う時、
　　礼儀にかなっていると思う時

英語
ａ）大切たと思う時、
　　礼儀にかなっていると思う時

ｂ）失礼にあたると思う時

ｂ）失礼にあたると思う時

5　会話の途中で、どんな時に沈黙があると、気まづく思いますか。また、
逆に、沈黙があっても気にならないのは、どんな時ですか。
具体的に、状況を示して下さい。（例・あまり親しくない人と、いる時）

日本語で話す時
ａ）気まづく思うのは、

英語で話す時
ａ）気まづく思うのは、

ｂ）気にならないのは、

ｂ）気にならないのは、

速くて、ついていけないから。

3）話し始める前に、考えをまとめることが、とても大切だから。

4）その他　（　　）

3　英語の授業中、質問に答えたいと思っていても、答えることが、できなかったことが、ありますか

a）よくある　・　時々ある　・　たまにある　・　全くない

b）それは、どうしてですか

4　英語の授業中、先生の質問の意味や、学習活動の目的や、やり方がわからない時、どうしますか。

A）動作

a）先生の方を見る。　（　　）

b）視線をそらす。（うつむく・他に、視線を向ける）　（　　）

c）頭を下げがちにする。　（　　）

d）その他（具体例を挙げて下さい。）　（　　）

B）口頭での返事

a）もう一度、質問を繰返してもらうか、もう少し、詳しく説明してもらう。　（　　）

b）近くの友人に、たずねる　（　　）

c）黙っている　（何も、言わない。）　（　　）

d）その他（具体例を挙げて下さい。）　（　　）

5　質問をされたり、自分の意見を発表する前に、もう少し、考える時間が欲しい時、どうしますか。

A）動作

a）先生の方を見る。　（　　）

b）視線をそらす。（うつむく・他に、視線を向ける　）（　　）

c）頭を、下げがちにする。　（　　）

d）その他（具体例を挙げて下さい。）　（　　）

B）口頭での返事

a）もう少し、考える時間が欲しいと、言う　（　　）

b）何も、言わない。（黙っている、）　（　　）

c）その他（具体例を挙げて下さい。）　（　　）

(5) 答えは、わかっていたり、自分の考えが、あったりするけれども、自信がなくて発言できない時、どうしますか。

A) 動作

a) 先生の方を見る。 ( )
b) 視線をそらす。(うつむく・視線を他に向ける。) ( )
c) 頭を、下げがちにする。 ( )
d) その他 (具体例を挙げて下さい。) ( )

B) 口頭での返事

a) 「わかりません。」と、言う。 ( )
b) 何も、言わない。 ( )
c) 先生が、質問の仕方を変えたり、他の質問をしてくれるのを、待っている。 ( )
d) 先生が、他の人に質問するのを待っている。 ( )
e) 自信がなくて、発言できないことは、ない。 ( )
f) その他 (具体例を挙げて下さい。) ( )

7 授業中、英語を使って、口頭で発言するのが難しいと思う時、先生に、どんな手助けをしてもらうと、より自信を持って、発言できると思いますか。
( )

8 先生(特に、英語を母国語とする先生=アメリカ人、イギリス人。。。の先生)に、日本の文化や、コミュニケーションの仕方で、英語を母国語とする人と、どんな違いがあることを、理解してもらいたいですか。
( )

(6) 欧米と日本の文化について

1 あなたは、会話を進める時に、どんなことに注意して、会話を進めますか。
(心がけて、いること。)

日本語で話す時	英語で話す時
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)

2 あなたは、日本語で会話を進める時に、よく「相づち」を、うつ方だと、思いますか。

はい ・ いいえ

「相づち」の役割は、何ですか。(どんな時に、相づちをうちますか。)
( )

Self-evaluation of language proficiency

	Reading		Writing		Speaking		Listening	
	LE	LJ	LE	LJ	LE	LJ	LE	LJ
Beginner	18.8	23.0	22.0	23.1	55.9	7.7	37.3	7.6
Pre- Intermediate	56.4	46.2	60.1	76.9	35.8	69.2	45.7	46.2
Upp -Intermediate	16.5	30.8	17.9	0	8.3	23.1	15.5	46.2
Advanced	8.3	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0

LE = Learners of English, LJ = Learners of Japanese (%)

Students' question 1: What are the difficulties when you communicate with your teacher and with your classmates in the target language during the lesson?

Student difficulties

	LE % (n=180)	LJ % (n=37)
.Problem with understanding	13.4	0
.Problem with lack of vocabulary	30.0	41.7
.Problem with how to express myself	43.4	33.3
.General poor proficiency	0	8.3
.Lack of confidence with pronunciation	4.8	0
.Lack of confidence with grammatical accuracy	2.6	0
.Lack of confidence in general	2.4	8.3
.Difficulty in communicating for a certain amount of time	1.0	0
.Difficulty in maintaining eye contact	1.7	0
.Need time to digest information	0.4	0
.Difficulty in dealing with unfamiliar topics	0.3	0
.Different levels of students	0	8.4

****

Students' question 2: (a) During an English / a Japanese lesson, do you feel that you want more time to think before responding to teachers or your class mates?

Need more time to think

LE (%)		LJ (%)
15.5 ******	a) always	0
33.6 **********	b) sometimes	**********46.2
43.6**********	c) seldom	*******15.4
7.3 **	d) not at all	**********38.5

(b) Why do you feel this?

	LE % (n=187)	LJ % (n= 48)
1) I need enough time to translate my idea	52.1	23.1
2) The speed or tempo in the target language is much faster than the speed or tempo in my mother tongue	21.5	23.1
3) I need enough time to sum up my idea	21.8	23.1
4) Others	0.7	0
5) Not Applicable (No problem)	3.9	30.7

****

Students ' question 3: How often do you remain silent because of lack of confidence in expressing yourself?

Table 7.9-(a) Being silent because of lack of confidence

LE %		LJ %
18.1********	(a) always	0
25.1**********	(b) sometimes	**********33.3
42.5**********	(c) seldom	**********41.7
14.3******	(d) not at all	**********25.0

Students ' question 3-(b): What are the resons for remaining silent?

Reasons for remaining silent

	LE % (n=179)	LJ % (n=41)
Linguistic problems		
.Problem with vocabulary	18.6	37.0
.Problem in how to express myself	32.2	27.5
.Problem in understanding	8.2	0
. Problem with translation	5.1	0
. Doubt about accuracy of my grammar	3.1	0
Problem with time		
. Lack of time	1.3	0
Problem with turn-taking		
. Was not given chance to speak out, turns were not allocated	1.6	0
. I usually raise my hand to express my opinion	0.9	0
. Missed timing (Others spead before I do, teacher moves on to other sts, difficulty in claiming turn)	5.5	0
. Teacher did not notice my small voice	0.7	0
. I have spoken too much, I want to give someone else a chance	0	11.5
Psychological problem: confidence		
. Lack of confidence, nervousness, shyness	8.4	24.0
. Because of my level of the target language	6.2	0
. Because of tensed atmosphere	2.3	0
. Lack confidence with my own idea	4.1	0
. I say something in my mind	0.7	0
. Lack of confidence with pronunciation	0.4	0
. Feel desperately in a hurry	0.7	0

****

tudents ' question 4: If you do not understand your teachers ' questio or how to do the activities given, what would you do?

5: If you need more time to think before responding, what would you do?

6: You think you know the answer, but do not have enough confidence to say it in front of the class, what do you do?

(a) Non-verbal behaviour - lack of understanding

Behaviour	LE % (n=181)	LJ % (n=38)
a) I look directly at my teacher	50.1	83.4
b) I look away (look down, look up)	23.3	8.3
c) I hang my head down	20.0	8.3
d) others	6.6	0

(b) Non-verbal behaviour - need more time to think

a) I look directly at my teacher	54.1	45.4
b) I look away.	20.0	36.4
c) I hang my head down	20.8	9.1
d) others	5.1	9.1

(c) Non-verbal behaviour - lack of confidence

a) I look directly at my teacher	48.9	41.8
b) I look away	27.2	33.3
c) I hang my head down	17.8	8.3
d) others	6.1	16.6

(b) Verbal responses - lack of understanding

Verbal-response	LE % (n=180)	LJ % (n=38)
a) I ask my teacher to repeat the question again or explain more	34.3	63.2
b) I consult with my friend	56.3	31.6
c) I keep silent	8.5	5.3
d) others	0.9	0

Verbal responses - more time to think

a) I tell my teacher that I still need time to think	50.6	53.8
b) I do not say anything	44.3	37.1
c) others	5.1	9.1

Verbal responses - lack of confidence

a) I say 'I don't know.'	42.0	16.7
b) I don't say anything	8.2	16.7
c) I wait for the time when my T tells me or asks me sth. More	30.3	33.3
d) I wait for the time when my T / asks the question to others	3.8	8.3
e) I do not have this problem	10.4	16.7
f) others (use of eye contact, Try to say sth., whispering, laugh	5.3	8.3

Students' question 7: When you have difficulties explaining yourself in spoken English / Japanese what do you expect your teacher to do for you?

Students' expectations of teachers' teaching strategies

Expectation	LE % (n=171)	LJ % (n=36)
Linguistic aspects		
. Give examples	7.9	0
. Give clues	9.4	0
. Give advice on how to say something	15.1	26.6
. Help with how to start	2.9	0
. Help with vocabulary	14.4	0
. Help in my mother tongue	2.2	0
. Explain in detail	2.9	0
. No use of my mother tongue	0	6.7
. Translation, write on board	0	6.7
. Feedback and correction	3.6	20.0
Time support		
. Give more time to think	6.5	0
Questioning		
. Make the meaning of question clearer	7.2	0
. Use more simple words (paraphrasing)	10.8	0
. Further questionning	1.4	0
. Yes / No question first	1.4	0
Psychological aspects		
. Need back-channelling response when T understands what I want to say	1.4	0
. Willingness to understand	2.9	0
. Encouragement, esp. on making errors	2.9	20.0
. Understanding non-verbal behaviour	0.7	0
. Step by step, patience	0.7	20.0
. Satisfaction if not forced to say something	1.4	0
Turn-taking		
. Speak slowly / slow down the pace	2.9	0
. Give me an opportunity to talk	0.7	0
. Do not call my name individually	0.7	0

Students ' question 8: What would you like teachers to understand about your culture or your culture 's way of communicating with others?

Japanese learners of English

1) Difference of the language system between Japanese and English itself (1.2%)
2) Individual differences (1.2%)
3) Difference of learning styles, especially previous learning experience (6.2%)
4) Different communicative styles (1.2%)
5) differences in non-verbal behaviour
   . less eye-contact (4.8%)
   . use of body language (1.2%)
   . use of *Aizuchi* to keep tempo in conversation (1.2%)
6) Japanese cultural norms (63.2%)
   . We are not so open (use of *enryo*)
   . Politeness / existence of the level of speech
   . Japanese are shy in comparison to the Westerners
   . Not everyone is active. There are students who have their own ideas and know the answers but are poor at expressing their opinion
   . We say something indirectly
   . I want the teacher to understand the Japanese cultural backgound, characteristics, weaknesses
   . Japanese want somebody to take initiative / create opportunity to talk
   . There are answers which can not be understood, only yes / no
   . Japanese people tend not to ask private matters in detail.
   . Japanese people are not accustomed to saying something by themselves, willingly, in public.
   . The Japanese have soft voices and do not express own ideas easily.
   . When we are not sure, we tend to be silent.
   . Being afraid of being shamed
   . The way of thinking and concepts differ
   . The Japanese are always conscious of others' ideas
   . The Japanese put the value on the use of silence / want T to wait a bit more.

The teacher's questionnaire

Question 1: Which aspects do you enjoy most in teaching English (Japanese) to Japanese (English) students?

Enjoyable aspects in teaching

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Seeing students progress & enthusiasm in learning	42.9	44.4	36.4
.Free situational conversation with students	0	13.9	18.2
.Genuine interest in teaching	28.6	13.9	9.1
. Students characteristics (Total) (inc. *friendliness,politeness, warmth, co-operation, disciplined and good natured hard-working / studious, respect for teachers, listen carefully and take good notes. finding students ' individual characters)*	14.2	28.0	27.3
.Not enjoyable because of the burden of exams.	7.1	0	0
.Designing syllabus		0	9.1

JET = Japanese English teacher, NET = Native English teacher, NJT = Native Japanese teacher: (%)

Question 2: What types of activities do your students enjoy?

Students' preferred activities

	JET % (n=53)	NET % (n=62)	NJT % (n=56)
.Discussion / speaking in the target language	28.6	17.7	7.1
.Conversational games	28.6	30.6	14.2
. TPR (Total Physical Resonse)	4.8	1.6	0
. Role play	4.8	6.5	7.1
. Pair / group work	4.8	22.6	22.9
. Free composition	4.8	0	0
.Watching video / film	9.5	4.9	0
. Songs / Music	9.5	3.2	0
.Quiz	4.8	4.9	0
.Communicative activities	0	1.6	0
.Anything fun	0	1.6	0
.Depends on the class	0	1.6	7.1
.Work sheet	0	1.6	0
.Thinking activity	0	1.6	7.1
. *Kanji* (Japanese writing)	0	0	7.1
. Personalization	0	0	7.1
. Communicating with native speakers	0	0	7.1
.Cartoon	0	0	7.1
. Realia	0	0	7.1

Question 3: What was your first impression in teaching English / Japanese to Japanese / English students?

The first impression in teaching English / Japanese to students

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n= 36)
.Need to keep their motivation high	14.3	0	0
.Quiet, shy, silent	7.1	28.6	0
.Difficulty in expressing themselves	0	20.0	18.1
.Passive	28.6	8.6	0
.Eager to learn, motivated	21.6	17.1	27.4
.Lack of confidence	7.1	0	0
.Skills were not higher than expected (gap between knowledge and oral skill)	0	11.4	0
.Inadequate previous training, more psychological support is needed	0	14.3	0
.Depends on the students	7.1	0	0
.Friendly, warm	7.1	0	9.1
.Polite	7.1	0	9.1
.Serious	0	0	18.1
.Nervous	0	0	9.1
.Need step by step approach	0	0	9.1

Teachers' question 4: What is the most challenging aspect for you in teaching English / Japanese to students?

(a) The most challenging aspect for teachers

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n= 36)
. Making them (students) understand	0	5.7	0
. Getting them to talk, get response from them	25.0	17.1	0
. Building confidence	0	8.6	0
. Motivating them	25.0	17.1	0
. Maximising the use of target language	0	2.9	0
. Getting them to ask questions	0	5.7	0
. Letting them take risks, responsibility	33.3	8.6	0
. I need to understand my students	0	8.6	0
. Large classes	0	5.7	0
. Textbooks	0	5.7	0
. Individual differences	0	5.7	0
. Method itself	0	2.9	10.0
. Correction	0	2.9	0
. Grammar explanation	8.4	3.0	40.0
. Teaching culture	8.3	0	10.0
. Ensuring that they pass the exam.	0	0	10.0
. Preparation for lessons	0	0	10.0
. Teaching politeness	0	0	10.0
. Preparing for unexpected questions	0	0	10.0

Question 5: Do you feel that Japanese / English students are rather shy or quiet?

Students' characteristics

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Yes	93.3	41.2	0
.Most	0	2.9	0
.Some	0	20.6	18.1
.Only until I know them well	0	5.9	0
.At first	0	8.8	0
.Compared to other nationalities	0	2.9	0
. No	0	11.8	46.5
.'Yes' in class, 'No' outside class	0	5.9	0
. Not sure	6.7	0	0
. Depends on students	0	0	36.4

Question 6: Do you feel uncomfortable if your students do not answer your questions immediately?

Discomfort in the use of silence

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
.Yes	12.5	5.7	10.0
. No	56.3	31.4	70.0
.At the beginning, at first	0	25.7	0
. Sometimes	25.0	17.1	20.0
. Slightly	0	8.6	0
. Accustomed	0	8.6	0
. Depends on the situation	6.3	2.9	0

Teachers' question 7-(a): If your students keep silent, how do you interpret their use and meaning of silence?

Teachers' interpretation of silence

Interpretation	JET % (n=52)	NET % (n=58)	NJT % (n=46)
. Sts do not know the answer	29.4	6.7	28.9
. Sts do not understand	11.8	33.3	19.8
. Thinking how to answer	29.4	22.2	33.3
. Shyness	5.9	6.7	4.8
. Boredom	11.8	4.4	0
. Cultural reasons	5.9	20.0	6.6
. Depends on the situation	5.9	6.7	6.6

Teachers' question 7-(b): What do you do if your students keep silent?

Strategy	JET % (n=46)	NET % (n=48)	NJT % (n=43)
. Encourage them to say something	16.7	0	7.6
. Be patient	0	3.7	0
. In team-teaching, let JET help sts	0	3.7	0
. I adjust my teaching style	0	3.7	0
. Try to make myself relaxed	0	3.7	0
. Return to the student later	0	3.7	0
. Give clues (verbally / non-verbally)	49.9	7.5	30.8
. Wait / Give time	16.7	25.9	38.5
. Call on a student by name individually	0	7.4	0
. Teach useful phrase to fill	0	3.7	0
. Allow them to work with friends	0	3.7	0
. Move on to another student	16.7	14.8	0
. Repeat, rephrase, explaining, ask again	0	14.8	23.1
. Advise not to be silent, say something to benefit, talk as much as possible	0	3.7	0

****

Teachers' question 8: When you teach English / Japanese to Japanese / Western students, do you take extra care to take cultural differences into account?

(a) Taking extra care to take cultural differences into account

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=40)
. Yes	50.0	75.8	90.0
. No	28.6	12.2	0
. Depends on the level	0	3.0	0
. Not sufficiently	0	3.0	0
. Not always	0	3.0	10.0
. In some ways	21.4	3.0	0

(b) Types of care to be taken

	JET % (n=40)	NET % (n=42)	NJT % (n=36)
. I teach my own (American) culture	0	14.3	0
. I take care, especially with beginners to break barriers		7.1	0
. Try to understand students' feeling	0	21.4	0
. I adjust automatically, unconsciously	0	7.1	0
. I am not sure whether I have stereotypes or not		7.1	0
. Be culturally sensitive	0	21.7	0
. Try not to put sts on the spot, let them work in groups	0	7.1	0
. Not to talk too slowly	0	7.1	0
. To speak slowly	0	7.1	0
. Teach difference of communicative style between the West and the Orient	25.0	0	0
. Let them know that there are diffrences	25.0	0	0
. Give lots of examples	25.0	0	0
. Explain NET that LE's passivity does not mean that they are not learning	25.0	0	0
. Teach level of speech	0	0	25.0
. To forbid which is socio-culturally unacceptable		0	25.0
. Interaction with students (turn-taking, non-verbal behaviour)		0	25.0
. Variety of learning activities, learners' learning strategies		0	25.0

Important points on living in Japan

Teachers' questionnaire:9 *If your friend asks you the important points on living in Japan, what would you tell him or her?*

NET

. For the Japanese, the group context is more important than their own feeling.
. Do not impose yourself on others
. Minimise assertiveness.

NJT

. Never do anything first. Wait until you understand a situation before joining or wait for an invitation.

JET

. When you want to say an opposite opinion, show that you accept the other person's opinion first and then go on to make your point.
. Try to understand what the other people think.
. Try to think the other person has finished everything she or he wanted to say before you take the turn to talk.

As far as the second point is concerned, there are comments as follows;

NET

. Learn to live with ambiguity
. Remember that the Japanese have two faces (*tatemae*) the one they show, (*honne*) the one they do not.
. The Japanese find it easier to say what they think they are expected to say than what they themselves think.

JET

. Avoid direct criticism.
. Many Japanese do not show their feeling directly towards those who are not close friends.
. You may not have to use ambigous expression but try to understand what has been meant.
. Avoid being direct.

Appendix 2-A

Scribble sheet: Name ( )

1. During the lesson were there any occasions when you did't understand the meaning of questions asked by your teacher or you didn't understand how to do the activity?

   a) always / frequently / sometimes / not at all

   b) When was it? (=Which activity were you doing? Which question were you asked? What did you do? (= Did you ask your teacher or friends something to make it clear?)

2. Were there any occasions when you needed more time to think?

   a) always / frequently / sometimes / not at all

   b) When was it? (= Which activity were you doing? Which question were you asked?) How did you react? (= What did you say? What did you do?) (eg. I kept silent, I asked my teacher to give me more time to think.....)

3. Were there any occasions when you had your own idea but didn't have enough confidence to say it in front of the class?

   a) always / frequently / sometimes / not at all

   b) When was it? (= Which activity were you doing? Which question were you asked?) How did you react? (= What did you say? What did you do?) (eg. I kept silent, I waited for the time when my teacher would ask me further questions....)

4. What sorts of support do you expect from your teacher so that you can express yourself more confidently, spontaneously?

<u>ご日の授業について</u>　　氏名（　　）　男・女

・ 今日の英語の授業中、先生の質問の意味が、わからなかったり、授業活動のやり方が、わからなかったことが、ありますか。

a）　いつも　・　頻繁に　・　時々　・　全くない

b）　それは、いつですか。（＝どの活動の時ですか。どの質問をされた時ですか。）その時、どうしましたか。（例・先生に尋ねた。友人に尋ねた。

2　先生の質問に答えたり、クラス・メートと一緒に何かの活動をしている時、答えたり、自分の意見を言う前に、もう少し考える時間が、欲しいと思ったことが、ありますか。

a）　いつも　・　頻繁に　・　時々　・　全くない

b）それは、いつですか。（＝どの活動の時ですか。どの質問に答える時ですか。）その時、どうしましたか。（例・考える時間が欲しいと言った。黙っていた。等）

The result of the scribble sheet: Japanese Learners of English (16 Female students)

1. During the lesson, were there any occasions when you did not understand the meaning of questions asked by your teacher or you did not understand how to do the activity?

a) always..... 0% (number=0)
b) frequently.....6.3% (number=1)
c) sometimes....81.1% (number=13)
d) not at all.....12.6% (number=2)

Comments:

S1: I don't remember when it was, but I was just listening and wasn't sure what is being asked.
S2: After translation, when I was asked questions about the passage which were translated, the teacher helped me.
S3: When the teacher was asking questions individually, I was listening carefully.
S4: When I could not be sure about what is being asked because of my poor listening. Then suddenly I was asked 'why?' I kept silent.
S5: I consulted with a dictionary and reconsidered about what the teacher said to me.
S6: While I was thinking, the teacher helped me.
S7: I looked up the dictionary and reconsidered slowly again.
S8: When the teacher speaks fast, I try to catch the information by considering about situational context.
S9: I asked my friend whether my answer (understanding) is correct or not.
S10: I ask my friend or I think by myself.
S11: I asked my friend.
S12: Towards the end of the lesson, I wasn't listening because of lack of concentration.
S13: When the teacher was asking questions to others, I was also thinking what to answer.
S14: I wasn't sure how to translate, I asked my friend later on.
* N/A.....2

2. Were there any occasions wehn you needed more time to think?

a) always.....0%
b) frequently.....6% (number=1)
c) sometimes....75% (number=12)
d) not at all.....19% (number=3)

Comments:

S1: When I was asked to answer in English, I kept silent.
S2: When I interact with the teacher individually. Although I need time to think, the teacher helps me.
S3: When I was asked to translate.

S4: All the time I feel nervous even if I know the answer and I kept silent.
S5: When I do translation, I needed more time to think.
S6: I kept silent.
S7: When I was asked an unexpected question, I thought for a while then told my opinion.
S8: When I can't summarize my idea, I kept silent.
S9: I kept silent.
S10: In general, most of the time.
S11: When the teacher speaks very fast, I can't translate my idea into English quickly. I kept silent while thinking.
S12: In translation, I kept silent.
* N/A.....4

3. Were there any occasions when you had your own idea but you did not have enough confidence to tell it in front of the class?

a) always.....6% (number=1)
b) frequently.....0% (number=0)
c) sometimes....50% (number=8)
d) not at all.....44% (number=7)

Comments:

S1: All the time. Anyway, I try to tell my answer.
S2: When I was asked a question such as 'If you are given an expensive watch as a present, what would you do?' Actually, I wanted to say, 'I will return it as it seems doubtful' but I didn't have confidence to say so because I was in front of the class, so I waited for another question to be asked by my teacher.
S3: When I was asked the answer of listening, anyway I said my answer.
S4: When I don't have enough confidence, I think about it again and tell my opinion or answer.
S5: I answer only when I was asked. During the rest of the time, I kept silent.
S6: The teacher gave me an example.
S7: I kept silent.
S8: When the teacher asks me questions, I want to tell my opinion but I am always conscious about other's reaction and...
* N/A.....8

4. What sort of support do you expect by your teacher so that you can express yourself more confidently, spontaneously?

S1: I want to be taught in simple English. (English which can be easily understood.)
S2: I would like to increase my vocabulary.
S3: I need more time to think.
S4: I am very shy, so I want the teacher to give me any chance to have daily conversation in English.
S5: I want the teacher to ask us more understandable question.
S6: When the teacher speaks in English, I want him to speak more slowly and want

the teacher to teach new words as usual.

S7: I want the teacher to ask us unexpected questions more, it would bring us opportunities to practice how to respond more quickly.

S8: I am satisfied with the current learning circumstances (teaching style) as he teaches us new words in Japanese.

S9: I think that the teacher's help is enough, problems comes only from myself, so I am trying to step forward.

S10: I want the teacher to speak a bit more slowly.

S11: Satisfaction

S12: I want him to ask us questions like 'what do you think about...? more. Then, it makes me think by myself and tell my own opinion.

English Learners of Japanese (6 Male, 3 Female)

1. *During the lesson, were there any accasions when you did not understand the meaning of questions asked by your teacher or you did not understand how to do the activity/*

a) always..... 0%
b) frequently.....0%
c) sometimes.....66.7% (number=6)
d) not at all.....33.3% (number=3)

S1: I asked the neighbour.

S2: -

S3: When the teacher was giving instructions in relation to the activities in the text, sometime moving from listening to reading was difficult.

S4: I asked the teacher and my friends.

S5: -

S6: -

S7: -

S8: No special activity - I asked the teacher and it was explained very good.

S9: The teacher is always clear, patient and explains all the activies in a concise manner.

2. *Were there any occasion when you needed more time to think/*

a) always.....0%
b) frequently.....11.1% (number=1)
c) sometimes.....44.4% (number=4)
d) not at all.....44.4% (number=4)

S1: Tried to make it up as quickly as possible.

S2: I kept silent.

S3: -

S4: -

S5: answering convoluted questions, answering the specified grammatical construction but in real life, you don't have enough time.
S6: I kept silent and asked my teacher.
S7: -
S8: Sometimes when new material is introduced. But, there is enough time to understand when it is explained further.
S9:-

3. *Were there any occasions when you had your own idea but you didn't have enough confidence to tell it in front of the class?*

a) always.....0%
b) frequently.....11.1% (n=9)
c) sometimes.....33.3% (n=3)
d) not at all.....55.5% (n=5)

S1: I kept quiet as I could not quite remember the correct grammar.
S2: I waited for the teacher to ask me.
S3: Rarely, but occasionally the teacher did not hear what I was saying.
S4: -
S5: -
S6: I waited for the time my teacher ask me further question.
S7: -
S8: Very good and personal course- very good one to one basis
S9: -

4. *What sorts of support do you expect by your teacher so that you can express yourself more confidently, spontaneously?*

S1: Perhaps explain tasks more slowly.
S2: I expect the teacher creates a comfortable atmosphere.
S3: None, in such a small goup, it is easy to say what you are trying to express.
S4: -
S5: No problems. Her relaxed attitude is fine.
S6: Speak more clearly and slowly please.
S7: I am very satisfied with the support the teacher gives her students. The group is quite mixed in ability and I think the teacher does excellently in including everybody in the class. I like the way the activities change frequently and that new vocabulary is introduced. I really enjoy these lessons.
S8: Nothing- keep alike that.
S9: The teacher gives every encouragement and is extremely supportive. I am confident to express myself without any problems.

Video Viewing Guide

Please watch the classroom video scenes and write descriptions of what is happening (What the student is doing) during the period of silence. After finishing the descriptions, please write how you interpret the meaning of silence in the second column.

<u>What is going on: Description</u>	<u>Meaning of the silence: Interpretation</u>
1)	
2)	

Comments of Informants at the Video Viewing Session

Task: Video Viewing Guide

Please watch the classroom video scenes and write descriptions of what is happening (What the student is doing) during the period of silence. After finishing the descriptions, please write how you interpret the meaning of silence in the second column.

A) Comments on the use of silence by a Japanese learner of English - Student A -

English informants (EI):

What is going on: Description	Meaning of the silence: Interpretation
EI 1: The teacher is trying to explain the colloquialism 'beat the heat' - he is talking and then asking questions of the class, however, no one is voluntarily responding to them. The students appear to be paying attention but are unable or unwilling to speak.	The students appear embarrassed to put themselves forward to speak. She appears not to want to single herself out of the group of their own accord.
EI 2: The student doesn't respond. Other students don't want to help. Student seems to pretend that teacher has not asked her anything. She shows no understanding. No eye contact.	Student doesn't know / is not sure of answer. She does not want to commit herself- she is afraid of being 'wrong.' She appears to have no confidence and hopes that if she does not answer the teacher will leave her alone. Also, she appears lazy, as she does not try to understand and when she finally answers, she says 'don't know' = easy option.
EI 3: Not answering questions while looking down, not looking at the teacher.	Embarrassed to answer the question.
EI 4: Looking down. Smile - say 'I don't know.'	Internal processing 'what does this mean? What does he want? I don't know what to say. Does he really need my input. I'd just embarrass him and myself if I ask a question. This is so boring.

EI 5: Teacher is talking all the time. Teacher's body language vs. her body language. No expression Look down - look up a teacher if he asks a question. Smile - when says 'I don't know.'	Embarassment? For a mistake? Turn-taking time, no possibility to confer. What would happen if the teacher was silent?
EI 6: The teacher asks questions.	She is thinking. Perhaps, she does not understand.
EI 7: Girl is looking down. Girl is looking at the teacher and nods. Girl is looking up and kind of stares at the teacher as if in thoughts.	She does not understand. She still looks unsure about the meaning of his word. She seems to have understood what has been said.
EI 8: Student is silent about question on 'beating the heat.' Her facial expression is puzzled and a little embarassed.	Does not fully understand question. She looks a bit shy about trying to answer.
EI 9: The student is looking slightly down into the far distance, unfocusing the eyes, She hangs her head down.	She wants the teacher to wait or ask another person. She needs more time or doesn't know answer or understand the question. Hanging her head down indicates she doen't know the answer or the question.
EI 10: Listening to the teacher, hoping she won't have to say anything. Frightened. Self-conscious. Embarassed.	She lacks self-confidence and doesn't want to speak. Possibly she understands but she gives no sign of understanding.
EI 11: Looking down. Looking up and listening. Watching the teacher. No answer. Eventually some reaction 'I don't know.' Blank expression.	The pupil looks afraid to answer the teacher's question. Why? Maybe he is too aggressive / forceful.
EI 12: She is looking down.	She doesn't understand.
EI 13: The teacher is trying to initiate discussion with students.	Hesitation, fear of making mistakes
EI 14: The teacher is asking an 'open' question of one particular student. He wants her to complete the sentence in order to show understanding of the expression 'beat the heat.'	She is maybe embarrassed at being the focus of the teacher's attention. It is possible she does not Understand what is expected of the question. She is afraid of getting

	the answer 'wrong.' Because she is unsure about what the teacher wants, she is keeping silent, rather than risk making a mistake.
EI 15: The teacher is <u>never</u> silent. Maybe if he was quiet for a moment, the student would say something. She obviously feels intimidated by the situation. She remains quiet and does not confer with her friends.	She (The student) is trying to think of an answer. She may know the answer but wants to make sure it is correct before she speaks out in front of the class. She may be intimidated by the teacher or by her classmates. In the same situation, I would have allowed her to discuss an answer with a partner or goup - so that she can check that she understands.....
EI 16: The girl is being asked a question but the question is not clear. Her expression is blank. When the teacher asks her another question - relating to and similar to the first, she still does not understand.	I think that the girl is confused. And she doesn't understand the question.

Japanese Informants (JI):
(Translated by the author except JI 9, 12, 14, 17)

JI 1: She is listening to the teacher. She notices that the teacher is talking to her, however, she can not find any word to utter and it led her to be silent.

At the beginning, she wasn't sure whether the teacher was talking to her. She finally notices this because of the atmosphere in the class and the teacher's eye contact. But, she can't find the word to say and also felt shy.

JI 2: She is listening to the teacher's explanation or questions, but she is embarassed since she can't answer.

She is very intrested in participating. But, she feels shy and embarassed to say something or answer something in English.

JI 3: She is consious of the existence of the camera and is touching her hair unconsciously.

Although she can answer if she tries, however, she does not want to give a wrong answer since the camera is there.

JI 4: She is looking at her text or the notebook. She looks at the teacher. The teacher continuously puts questions to her. The other students adverts their gaze to her from time to time.

She is looking for an answer. She tries to understand what the teacher is asking. But, she can't understand. She is confused. She is embarrassed and feels shy.

JI 5: She is embarrassed. Although she understands some sentences such as 'eating icecream' or 'beat the heat', she is not sure about what to answer and also doesn't know how to clarify the questions being asked and is embarrassed.

She is confused about whether the teacher is talking about the content of the text and or asking something about her. If she knows some useful formulaic expression to make the conversation flow and can use them, maybe this silence would not take place or this situation would be improved.

JI 6: She is looking at the teacher. She looks down and nods. Listening. Small laugh. Blinking. She doesn't know the answer and feels Shy. She does not communicate with the teacher.

She is waiting for the teacher to lead her to answer, to give her an answer or to finish by himself. She hopes that she can escape from this situation without saying anything. There is a cultural gap between the teacher and the students. She is not happy to be focused individually in

	class and she is shy.
JI 7: No reaction (without saying anything). She seems not to understand the questions and remains silent. After three opinions are given (Yes, No, I don't know), she answered 'I don't know.' Overall reaction is blank.	She can't answer because she does not understand. Or she understands what is being asked but can't find any good answer. Or she feels ashamed of saying that she doesn't understand or know the answer. She might wait for the teacher to move on to another student if she keeps silent.
JI 8: She might be feeling that the teacher's attitude is aggressive.	She does not understand what is being asked. Because of his aggressive attitude, her mind is not really following anything.
JI 9: She is listening carefully. Concentration on listening. She seems to unserstand what 'to beat the heat' means. She answers 'I don't know.' The teacher is trying to expalin with gesture.	She may be shy. She might not understand what the teacher is saying. She can't think of answer, because she is nervous.
JI 10: Although the teacher paused after asking 'Eating....., he kept asking or talking until he asks 'Do you agree?. Then her mouth slightly moved. By being given three opinions, her facial expression was slightly relaxed. She said, 'I don't know.' But, the teacher is unsatisfied with that answer, so her facial expression became tensed again.	She has no possibility to indicate that she does not understand. By keeping silent, she might have showed that she doesn't understand. Since she doesn't understand, she said 'Yes.' She hopes that she can escape from this tensed atmosphere.
JI 11: She is litening to the teacher properly and understands what is being asked. However, she is more conscious wtih other's reaction rather than whether she understands or not. Then, her concentration is low.	Psychological conflict of the girls in this generation is shown here. The question asks her own opinion but not grammatical meaning of the key sentences. In this case, some students might find it difficult to give her own opinion. If the teacher focuses on an individual, students' characteristics or the classroom dynamism need to be taken into account.
JI 12: She looked down and looked at the teacher. Opened her mouth. Smiled at the teacher. Touched her hair. When the teacher spoke to	Whatever she understands what the teacher said, she responded to him in order to tell him that she

	her, she looked down.	was listening by smiling, touching hair.
JI 13:	She is listening at her teacher. She looks very nervous. She doesn't know how to answer. Since the teacher gave options, she answered 'I don't know' and feels relaxed and smiled.	Perhaps, she kept silent since others pay attention to her and it made her nervous. Maybe, she is not confident with her English and can not answer what she thought immediately. It is usual in the Japanese context.
JI 14:	She didn't respond actively. She was looking down and tried not to keep eye contact at first. But, she was looking at the teacher. Even though the teacher was trying to make her respond, she did not meet his expectation.	I think there are two possibilities. One is that she didn't understand what the teacher said. In this case, 'silence' can be resulted from her poor ability of English. The other is that the characteristics of Japanese students, which is trying not to be outstanding among people, can be the meaning of silence although it depends on the personality.
JI 15:	She is looking at a point. She is looking down and doesn't move. Very little reaction and movement.	Although she understands what the teacher says, she is nervous because of the fact that she is expected to answer. So, she can't answer.
JI 16:	When being asked questions, she looks down. She is confused although she looks at the teacher. The teacher gives three opnions and she only answers for this.	She does not understand what the teacher is saying. She is confused about how to answer. If she doesn't understand, she should say so. Also, the teacher should use only English.
JI 17:	The female student is being asked to express her opinion as to 'how to beat the heat' by the teacher. She kept silent most of the time.	She is being somewhat intimidated by the atmosphere caused by his question. She also seems to feel uncomfortable with her own silence.
JI 18:	She looks down sadly. The teacher asks her to reply, but she does not understand so she smiles.	She does not understand English.

B) Comments on the use of silence by a Japanese student - Student B -

English Informants:

What is goin on: Description	Meaning of the silence:Interpretation
EI 1: The teacher directs a specific question to a female student a scenario about a present from an admirer. The teacher asks her if she accepts the present . A bit sexist. The teacher ends up answering his own questions. The student watches the teacher, and then laughs.	The students doesn't seem to know the specific language in which to respond - the student who is being addressed seems to understand the general story, but doesn't know how to respond.
EI 2: Student smiles but does not answer question by teacher. The teacher carries on talking and does not give her much chance to answer.	Embarassed. Think that answer is wrong or right only. So, she doesn't want to be wrong.
EI 3: The student laughing with hand over her mouth, touching her hair, her eye and holding onto the chair tightly.	Embarrassed because all eyes are on her, and she is maybe not sure what the teacher is saying.
EI 4: She looks at him and covers her mouth, looks down, looks up from under eyelids and says 'I will resign.'	Embarrassment.
EI 5: Nervous. Hand over face. Head down. Same body posture. Giggles. Quiet answer.	Thinking? No opportunity for giving an answer. Gender effect?
EI 6: Waiting for explanation.	She is thinking. Maybe, she does not understand.
EI 7: The teacher addresses a particular girl and wants to know her opinion. The girl is hesitant to answer. Looks at the teacher and smiles.	It looks as if she is unsure about either the meaning of the question or her personal opinion on the subject in question.
EI 8: Question about accepting on expensive present. The student is amused by the teacher.	I think the student understands the question but remains silent because she is not sure what answer the teacher wanted to hear.
EI 9: Laughs. Looks down. Hand to forehead.	By putting her hand to forehead, she is trying asking time but showing link between teacher and student is still there.

EI 10: Listening. Trying to think of an answer. Eventually saying something.	Afraid to speak because she thinks she may make a mistake or say something foolish.
EI 11: Slight shrugging, nodding in agreement to a suggestion of the teacher. After some thinking, she replies quietly.	She seems afraid of saying the wrong answer - peer pressure and finds the teacher's approach aggressive.
EI 12: She is looking at the teacher.	She is waiting to be asked because she is afraid of answering.
E 13: Provoke curiosity.	-
E 14: The teacher sets the scene for a hypothetical situation and asks a student what she would do, and why. He attempts to lighten the tone of the class by using an example that the students can easily relate to. He uses 'drama' (body language, Japanese etc.) to ensure the meaning is clear.	The student clearly understands what is expected. However, she is reluctant to answer - maybe for fear of making a mistake, maybe because her answer may be followed by another question for which she will be unprepared.
E 15: The student is obviously embarrassed - she covers her face with her hand and giggles a lot. It is difficult to tell if she understands the the teacher.	The student should be encouraged to be allowed to confer with a partner or group before she answers the question. If she feels intimidated by the situation she will not learn anything. I think.
E 16: The girl is being asked what she would do if someone gave her a very expensive present - she reacts with a giggle. The teacher prompts her to answer with more information - and he does speak a little Japanese to help her.	I think that she understands the question but her English is inadequate for her to answer therefore, she remains silent. She finally replies but her answer is not really correct.

Japanese Informants (JI):
(Translated from Japanese to English by the author except JI 9, 12, 14,17)
Note: Informants are asked to give their opinion either in Japanese or in English.

What is going on: Description	Meaning of the silence: Interpretation
JI 1: She felt embarrassed by being asked a question. Since she has to communicate in English and can not find an answer.	Maybe, she got blank since she is nervous and is afraid of making mistakes of giving a wrong answer.
JI 2: She is listening to the teacher questioning and explaining. She also smiles. She also thinks for a while and answers.	She seems to be enjoying the lesson. She is thinking of an answer how to answer in English. In English lesson, there are occasions when students cannot answer because they need time to think. (It is not unusual.)
JI 3: Her smile shows her hesitation.	She appears not to understand the quesion. This might be caused by the way the teacher teaches her.
JI 4: The teacher calls a student individually and starts explaining. The student keeps silent after being asked a specific question. She was asked to give an answer and kept silent by looking at the teacher but, finally answered. The teacher started explaining the reason why it is better not to receive the expensive present.	The focused student and also others laugh. So, she understands the question. She is trying to think of the situation. She thinks that she should not accept it. But, she can not explain the reason. There is no objection about the reason for not accepting the present.
JI 5: She understands the meaning of some words and the situation given by the teacher. But she can not be sure about her understanding. Therefore, she is also not sure whether her answer is right or not.	She is wondering whether her understanding is right or not, however, she is confused and uncertain since the teacher tells her various things at the same time.
JI 6: She is trying to answer the question but can not be confident altough she is serious. Culturally, the Westerner feels pressure with the existence of silence.	The use of the smile has a link with the use of silence. Her smile shows hesitation. Although she understands what the teacher is saying, she can't construct the sentence by herself. Afraid of making mistakes? The teacher keeps on talking. For the Japanese, it takes time to think in English. I wonder whether the teacher understands the

	student's difficulty.
JI 7: She is smiling. She seems to be waiting for the teacher to give her an answer.	She understands what is being asked, but, she is thinking how to say in English. She can answer if she tries, but, she is afraid of giving her opinion since the answer might reflect her personal life. Or she has not willingness to answer.
JI 8: Smiling. Trying to answer. Embarrassed.	She seems to understand what is being asked. I wonder whether she understands the value of the Swiss made watch. If the female teacher teaches them, the atmosphere might be different.
JI 9: Cover her mouth. Laugh (smile) shyly. Concentraion on the teacher, waiting to say something. She seems like, just about to say. But maybe wondering how she may actually want to say 'I will accept it.' But, because the teacher already assumes and says that she should not, she remains quiet.	Thinking of which word to say (trying to choose a word). Just deciding slowly. Taking up courage to say what is in her mind.
JI 10: She does not start talking until the teacher takes enough pause. She smiles. She started saying 'I..I...'when being asked 'Will you accept it?' She laughs when the teacher talks in low voice.	Her smile has two meanings; one is that she finds what the teacher is saying interesting and the other is her hesitation. She understands what she is expected to do, but not sure how to say in English. She looks uncertain. Maybe she kept silent since she is not confident.
JI 11: She was intrested in what the teacher is saying at first, but gradually she was tired of the story given by the teacher. For the teacher, he is trying to ask questions.	She is not concentrating on what the teacher is saying possibly. The teacher is not trying to elicit the answer and does not understand whether the student really concentrates on engaging the task.
JI 12: She touched her mouth, face, hair and smiled, and moved her hands continuously. She also looked down.	Maybe, when she moved her hands and touched her body; she may be thinking what she has to do and trying to understand. She gives to the teacher the sign which is difficult to understand.
JI 13: She is nervous when she is required to give an answer. She understands what the teacher	She understands well and knows the answer. But, since it is difficult

	is saying, but cannot answer explicitly. She smiles after giving her opinion with a sense of relief.	to express idea in English explicitly, she tries to terminate the task by giving a simple answer. If she gets used to interacting in this way, she would be able to communicate more actively.
JI 14:	She is really conscious of the video camera. She was listening to the teacher, looking at him. She gave a wrong answer (She could not express what she really wanted to say), but compared with student A, she seemed to be a little more involved.	She seemed to understand the question, but it seemed to me that she didn't exactly know which word could express what she means. This means that she was not confident in her answer. I think she was afraid of making a mistake. Japanese students might expect their teacher to shift his attention to another student by keeping silent.
JI 15:	She habitually touches her hair and looks up at her teacher, squeezes her shoulder and puts her neck on the one side.	She is afraid of giving an answer and buying the time while she is thinking seriously.
JI 16:	She is enjoying the teacher's over- reaction and smiling. She is embarrassed since she does not understand what is being asked. She is touching her hair to make her relaxed.	She simply enjoys the over reaction given by the teacher. She might have expected that she would not be focused. She also does not try to understand by asking questions. The smaller number of students in a class would be better.
JI 17:	The female student is being asked to express her response if a very expensive present is offered to her by her would-be 'boyfriend.'	She seems to understand her task, yet seems to feel 'reluctant.'
JI 18:	She is enjoying the lesson. The teacher's reaction is interesting. She is embarrassed by being focused on.	She understands English. She is trying to think of an answer but can not express it well in English. She might want to accept it.

A) Comments on the use of silence by an English learner of Japanese - Student A -

English informants (EI):

What is going on: Description	Meaning of the silence: Interpretation
EI 1: Kept silent. Looked a little puzzled.	Not sure how to answer, and listening to teacher's explanation.
EI 2: The student was silent and looking a little confused - scratching his head	He was confused by the use of *desu* after the past tense and was thinking about the explanation / further demonstration.
EI 3: The student, when asked a question responding scratching his nose, looking around and looking for an answer.	He was confused when the grammar form was said to him disconnected from the full phrase.
EI 4: The student fails to answer question.	Unnable to form correct answer in Japanese.
EI 5: He wasn't sure of the grammar of the sentence. So, he was very hesitant.	He was listening to the teacher's explanation and trying to comprehend the teacher's explanation.
EI 6: He does not want to answer.	He won't answer until he understands - waiting for explanation. He doesn't want the class to continue while he is still confused.
EI 7: Looked as if he was thinking of alternative ways of expressing an answer.	He wasn't 100% sure of the meaning of the question. He wanted prompting.
EI 8: The teacher is trying to explain the difference between '*naritai (want to become)*' and '*naritakatta (wanted to become)*'. She asks each student in turn what they wanted to be when they were little.	The student is unsure that he has really understood the concept. He may have grasped the underlying principle - present vs. past, but does not realize it in the full sentence '*naritakkata desu.*' For him, grasping the essential principle is important. Attention to conversational practice is less so.
EI 9: Students are listening. Some are repeating. Laughing. Male student speaks to the teacher. Scratches his chin, looks at the black board, fiddles with fingers, opens mouth, folding	Self-conscious. Pretending to understand Acting? out concentration and puzzling over answer.

his arms and sits back.

EI 10: Touching his nose, poking finger in mouth, sitting back folding arms.	Unsure about what is required of him. Folding arms - a defensive gesture, wants to let someone else answer.
EI 11: '*naritakatta (wanted to become)*' - The teacher is explaining to him how to use it.	He has already said what he wanted to be, so he doesn't know what to answer when he is asked the question again. He doesn't realise there was something wrong with the form of the answer, not the content.
EI 12: He did not understand the form of the sentence.	He was wondering what to say but maybe, he did not want to make mistakes since he might have thought that the others might laugh at him.
EI 13: He has his hand in front of his mouth. He fiddles nervously. He opens his mouth and touches his upper lip with his forefinger. Then he sits back. Twice he attempts to say something	He is listening to the teacher and he is trying to understand what she is saying. He only partly understands. He is attempts to mask his lack of understanding.
EI 14: Class being asked what they would like to be.	The student is listening to the teacher's explanation.

Japanese informants (JI):

What is going on: Description	Meaning of the silence: Interpretation
JI 1: -	The pronunciation of '*naritakatta desu.*' was difficult. The past tense of *naritai desu, naritakatta desu*was not properly acquired. Or thinking of the matter of how to make the past tense of *naritai desu.*
JI 2: Practice of the use of '*naritakatta*' The student seems to understand the structure of the sentence form systematically, but, he was not sure about the use of the form as the past tense.	He was thinking of his answer. He was thinking in his head.
JI 3: The student stopped at the point when he is required to use *'naritakatta desu .'* He asked 'What did I want to become?'	He seems to be confused about the use of *'naritakatta desu.'* He appears to be thinking seriously, so it is not the same use of the silence by the Japanese because of the hesitation. He wants the teacher to explain. After the explanation, he seems to understand the form and the use of the expression.
JI 4: He was not sure how to answer and then kept silent.	Maybe, he wanted to say '*naritakatta desu.*' but wondering how to say it and kept silent.
JI 5: During the Japanese lesson, the student is practicing the use of *'naritakatta'*. And he stopped after saying 'soccer player.'	He forgot the sentence which he had thought of saying. Although the teacher teaches, he was confused.
JI 6: He puts his hand over his chin. He is writing something written on the black board.	He is thinking how to answer.
JI 7: He did not understand the key structure.	He needs explanation.
JI 8: Students are required to give a sentence of using *'naritakatta'* individually. But, the first two students answered by only giving their answer in a word, so the male also answered in a word and was not sure of the use of *'naritakatta'*.	He did not understand the meaning of *naritai* and *naritakatta*. Then he kept silent and asked a question in English. While he kept silent, he was thinking.
JI 9: He was looking at the teacher attentively and writing something down. He was also practising (murmuring) the phrase by	He was silent because he did not understand the target phrase well. He was also trying to understand it

himself.	by keeping his attention into the teacher. Positive silence by showing his willingness to understand.
JI 10: He is required to practise the use of *'naritakatta desu'* in Japanese.	He seems to put more attention to telling what he wanted to become than how to say it in a complete correct sentence. There are even Japanese who do not use the complete sentence. So, he does not look tensed and stressed.
JI 11: He is looking at the teacher.	He is thinking of the answer or he was not sure how to say it, so he is thinking and kept silent.

B) Comments on the use of silence by an English learner of Japanese - Student B -

English Informants (EI):

What is going on: Description	Meaning of the silence: Interpretation
EI 1: The student was asked a question, but stopped and could not answer and looked puzzled.	He could not think of the correct answer.
EI 2: The student was asked a question.	The person answering felt unable to think of vocabulary to answer although he understood the grammar.
EI 3: He was desparate to look at the example on the board, so was able to repeat but needed probably more practice or a visual prompt. The others could respond whilst using the example to assist them.	-
EI 4: Students fails to answer the question using vocabulary and grammar introduced in this lesson.	Unfamiliar with the grammar , inadequate vocabulary.
EI 5: He was a little quiet because he was confused.	He waited for the teacher to explain. He looked puzzled as the learner has to make the sentence. He forgets the right vocabulary.
EI 6: Fairly quiet but repeating after the teacher.	He did not understand really, trying to work out what to say.
EI 7: Looked confused.	He did not understand the question.
EI 8: The teacher is getting students to ask and answer questions showing they know how to use adjectival endings *'-ku' '-ni'*. The black-shirted student asks the student a question with a mistake in the usage of '*dounarimashita ka'*. The target student is unable to answer and asks the teacher for clarification.	
EI 9: Puts his hand over his face, turns body, watches the teacher, turns other way, knits eyebrows.	Trying hard to understand thinking, not self-conscious
EI 10: Puts hand over his nose	He does not hesitate long enough for him to be more than just thinking about the answer.

EI 11:	The teacher asks him for the opposite word.	He was trying to think of the right answer.
EI 12:	He did not know the answer and was too embarrassed to say so straight away.	He used his body language to hide his pace and wants the teacher to prompt him.
EI 13:	He waves his hand around. He is trying to remember a word. He looks over his shoulder to the teacher. Does the other student ask him a question? Evidently, he thinks he has to say something.	He is trying to remember a word. He looks to the teacher for help. He seems to understand the grammar point.
EI 14:	The student has been asked a question.	Searching for the right word, but who might not understand the construction.

Japanese informants (JI):

What's is going on: Description	Meaning of the silence: Interpretation
JI 1: -	Maybe he was not sure about the grammatical structureof the target sentence.
JI 2: A student asks a question. Since the question itself was not clear enough, the one who was asked the question was confused. He asked the teacher for help, however, did not know how to say in Japanese.	The student did not understand the question. He was a bit confused. Or, he knew the answer but was not sure how to say it inJapanese.
JI 3: The black-shirted student asked a question to the target student. (The question form is wrong.) Then, the student started thinking and did not ask for clarification. The teacher corrects the question form. The teacher asks the opposite word of 'noisy' and she explains the grammatical point.	The target student shows uncertainity on his face. He simply did not understand? He tries to answer, but still seems not to understand the question. He is relieved by knowing the meaning of the question. He feels satisfied by knowing the answer.
JI 4: He was wondering what he has been asked. Then, he started thinking what the word to answer was.	Although he was trying to answer, the question form was wrong and it made him confused. Also, he has fogotten the word, *'shizuka'*.
JI 5: The interaction between two students. The student kept silent after being asked a quesiton.	This sort of situation takes place quite often. Although he understands the grammar, he forgot the word to say.
JI 6: He is looking around and looks at the teacher.	He did not understand the question. This would happen when somebody is asked a question suddenly.
JI 7: -	Since the question form was wrong, he could not understand the meaning of the question. It made him keep silent.
JI 8: After being asked a question, he was not sure how to answer the question. After being explained by the teacher, he answered.	He did not know or forgot the word to answer and then kept silent. After being explained by the teacher, he is thinking hard and trying to answer.
JI 9: At first, he didn't understand the question. He is looking around and he was thinking and asked for help. After he answered the question, he nodded his head as if he was convincing himself.	He just didn't understand the question. He used silence to show that he didn't understand and to review what he has learnt.

JI 10: The student is required to answer the question by using the target phrase.	He did not understand the first question. Possibly because the question itself was grammatically incorrect. His silence was to ask the teacher for help.
JI 11: He turns back. He tries not to keep silent by moving his hands continuously.	He tries to answer. Anxiety for him not to be able to answer caused lots of body movement.

Appendix 4-A

Transcription of student-teacher interaction

Transcription 1: English class -Student A

0:03 T: So, another three examples of ....is the best way of ...., Miss Shoji.
S: [Silence 7".89]
(She hangs her head down and looks blank, complete absence of facial expression.)
0:11 T: Eating icecream is the best way of what?
S: [Silence 11".62]
(She looks down but looks at the teacher when the teacher started saying something.)
0:26 T: Eating icecream is the best way, to beat the heat, to beat the heat.
0:37 Do you know what I mean? To beat somebody. *Uchitaosu, ne.*
0:43 Heat. *Nan desu ka? Atsusa. (What is it? The heat.)*
0:49 *Atsusani tatakau tameni wa aisukurimu o taberu.*
0:54 *Ichiban ii houhou desu ne.* Do you agree with that sentence?
1:00 Do you agree? Eating icecream is the best way of beating the heat?
S: [Silence 4".12]
(She slightly looks away.)
1:11 T: Yes, sir. No, sir. I don't know. Three options. Yes, No, or I don't know.
S: [Silence 3".67]
1:20 I don't know.
(She slightly smiles.)
1:22 T: I don't know. Look at this. I don't know. What is the best way then?
1:29 To beat the heat, what is the best way?
1:37 The best way to beat the heat is.....? What is the best way, then?
S: [Silence 52. 77]
(She hangs her head down.)
1:47 T: What do..? Buun.. What do you call this?
1:52 The best way to beat the heat is...?
2:00 S: [Silence 7".21] (She is looking at the teacher.)
2:07 T: The best way to beat the heat, ...is the air conditioner. Nn?
Maybe in *Katakana*, that's the way they do.
2:25 The best way to beat the heat is, ti ku, the best way to beat the heat is air conditioner.
Kuura. You see. *Kuura.* There are many ways of beating the heat.
We will have something to think of what to do in hot, hot summer days.
What is the best thing to do. Now let us come back to our topic.

Transcription 2 - The use of silence in English class -student B-

2:58 T: This is a question for you. You have to answer to me, Miss Sasano. One day, you are dating with *Jinzaburo* (Japanese name). So, and Jinzaburo one day comes with a present. Right. *Yukako, nani mo naikeredomo....*
(Yukako, I have nothing special, but....)
3:26 You open the gift, a Swiss made watch, 15*man* (150000 yen). What do you do? What do you do?
3:50 Do you take the present? Ah, ...shall I take this wwatch? Ah,..do you do that?
4:17 This is a question for you. What do you do when somebody offers you a very very expensive present? Nn?
S: [Silence 9".98]
(She looks at the teacher briefly and then looks away and hangs her head down.)
4:33 T: What do you do?
4:36 S: [Silence 6"'61] I resign.
4:40 T: 'I resign,' she said. I will not accept it. You can tell him anytime. 'I am very Sorry, I'm very sorry , Jinza. I cannot accept it, Jinza, sorry... This is.. This is too much for me. Why? Why/
5:04 Can you tell me the reason why?
S: [Silence 4".08]
(She puts her left hand to her neck and looks away while listening and glances up.)
5:10 T: Well, the reason is psychological reason. If you accept this very very expensive present, this present will enslave you. It is going to be like a chain for you.

Transcription 3: Japanese Class - Student A

36	T: *Jya, Sonia san wa chiisai toki, nan ni naritakkata desu ka?*	Well, what did you want to become Sonia?
40	S1:*Keikan.*	Policeman.
41	T: *Keikan? Sonia san wa keikan ni naritakkata desu. Alisu san wa?*	Policeman? Sonia wanted to become a policeman. How about Alice?
44	S2: *Ano, baree dansaa.*	Well, a ballet dancer.
46	T: *Aa, dansaa ni naritakkata desu ka? Jya, baree o naraimashita ka?*	Ah, you wanted to become a ballet Dancer. Then, you learned ballet?
50	S2: *Hai.*	Yes.
51	T: *Joe san wa?*	How about Joe?
54	S3: *Aa, yuumeina sakkaa preiyaa.*	Ah, a famous soccer player.
56	T: *.....ni?.....ni? naritakkata desu.*	.....wanted to become.
00	S3: *Naritakatta*....[silence 6".1]	.....wanted to become.....
06	What did I want to become?	What did I want to become?

Transcription 4: Japanese Class - Student B

9:18	S1: *Kurai heya deshita. Denki o tsukete Doumarimashita ka.* *ıshita.*	It was a dark room. I put on the light.
9:27	S2: *Hai, akaruku ni narimashita.*	How was it changed?
9:28	T: *Hai, akaruku narimashita. Hai, Joe san wa?*	Yes, it became lighter.
9:42	S3: *Fransisco san wa, Rajio o kesuto, heya ni narimashita ka.*	Yes, it became lighter. When I turned off the radio, did it become a room? *(wrong expression)
9:48	S4: *Nn.....*[Silence 3".71] (He puts his hand over his head and looks down and turns towards the teacher.)	
9:52	S5: *Rajio o kesuto, dou narimashita ka.*	Turning off the radio, how did it change?
	S1: *Dou narimashita ka/*	
9:56	S4: *Nn....*[silence 4".64] *Urusai.* (Noisy).	
9:59	(He waves his hands around.)	
10:00	T: *Rajio ga tsuiteiru to 'on' dato nan to iimasu ka.* Noisy *tte iuno wa nante iimasu ka.*	If the radio is on, what would you say? What is 'noisy' in Japanese?
10;03	S4: *Urusai.*	
	T: *Sono hantai wa nan desu ka.*	What is the opposite meaning?
10:08	S4: *Urusakunari....*	...became noisy.
10:12	T: *Shizuka.* (The teacher writes a word on the blackboard as a prompt.)	Quiet.
10:14	S4: *Shizukani narimashita.*	It became quiet.
10:15	T: *Soudesu ne.*	Yes, it is.